

¹⁶
PREPARATION
Part **FOR** *Brue*
DEATH:

OR,

**Acts of GRACES and pious
EXERCISES, in order
to a happy END ;**

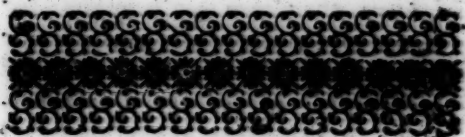
Very useful at all Times, but
more especially in the Time
of Sickneſs, and on the Ap-
proach of our Diſſolution.

Done from the French.

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T H E P R E F A C E.

ALTHO' it is the Duty of
A Christians, above all others,
 at all Times to love GOD,
 Worship him and pray unto
 him; yet there are particular Times
 and Occasions, wherein they are more
 especially obliged to Acts of Graces
 and pious Exercises: Such as, when
 One is attacked with strong Tentations.
 when One is setting about the more
 solemn Duties of our holy Religion,
 and when One is visited with Sick-
 ness, or drawing near the Gates of
 Death.

A Person in this last Situation, is
 in a more peculiar Manner called to
 the Exercise of the Graces of the Ho-
 ly Spirit, because then he may be in
 danger of perishing eternally, then he

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is more than ever to pray for the Grace of Perseverance, and because then he is to fulfil the first and most indispensable of all the Commandments, which obliges him to love GOD always, but principally at the End of his Life.

It is true indeed, we are then the least capable of discharging any Duty; a sick Person generally thinks of nothing but his Illness and Pains, and if sometimes he should lift up his Heart and Mind to Almighty GOD, the uneasiness he suffers, and the Apprehension he is seized with, hinder him from conceiving that Love for GOD, and from making these Acts of other Virtues, which are then so necessary for him to make.

Hence it may be thought a great Piece of Prudence, while we enjoy Life and Health, to make often these Acts which are hereafter set down, lest we should not be able to make them at our dying Moments.

Besides, the frequent use of these devout Exercises, will grow at last into a Habit, and GOD, whose goodness is infinite, and who desires nothing so much as our Salvation, will accept

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accept of the Preparation we make in our Lifetime, for want of that which we ought to make at our Death.

To secure then the important Affair of our Salvation, and for disposing us happily for our great Journey of Eternity; it will not be improper at sometimes, as Discretion directs (and the oftner the better) to place our selves in the State of a dying Person, and to consider our selves as at the point of Death. In this View let us, through the Assistance of divine Grace, make confession of our Sins in the Bitterness of our Heart, let us beg of GOD for Pardon and Reconciliation thro' the Merits of JESUS CHRIST, and that we may obtain the Grace of Perseverance. Let us make these Acts of Virtue, and Graces of the Holy Spirit, which are hereafter set down in these Preparations.

It will do very well to have Recourse to these Preparations, when any one finds himself assaulted with any violent Temptation; for nothing is more capable to repress these Attacks, than the Thoughts of dying.

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Every Particular Person may do the same; before he goes to the holy Communion; for these several Acts or Exercises of the Graces and Virtues of the Holy Spirit, will contribute very much towards moving the Heart to a Contrition and Devotion, which ought always to accompany that solemn Duty.

Such also who visit the sick, or assist dying Persons, may make use of some one of these Thoughts or Preparations; but they are to take care not to weary the sick Person with too much Reading; a little Nourishment at a Time, and repeated the oftner, is fittest for weak Persons. And such are also to be minded, to read these Preparations leisurely and distinctly; That the sick Person may the better understand and joyn with what is said.

If one of these following Preparations were read once a Week with Seriousness and Devotion in Families, it would prove of great Advantage; for by this Means every one, tho' never so ignorant at first, would learn both to live well and to die well, and this would in a short Time produce such
Acts

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Acts of Virtue, as hitherto they have scarce been acquainted with, altho' necessary to be practised at all Times.

There are no People, at the Hour of Death, more destitute of spiritual Help and Comforts than the Poor, many of them dying without any assistance at all; Wherefore it will be looked upon, not as one of the least Acts of Charity, to disperse some of these little Books: For an Alms of this Nature will prove of more real Advantage, than if you gave them large Sums of Money; because by these Books, you may be a Mean of helping them to die well, which will procure them eternal Riches and Happiness. And these who give this Charity will not be Losers by it, for what in this World they receive not the Hundred Fold, they may hope that the Father of Mercies will reward their Charity with a happy Death, and eternal Life in the World to come.



THE
INTRODUCION,
BEING

A short EXHORTATION,
To prepare One's self to
die well.

 F all the Moments of our Life, That is best employed, wherein we prepare our selves for Death; for it is the most important of all our Affairs, as our Lord himself teaches us in his Gospel, saying, *Be ready, for the Hour will come on which you think not.* And in the Parable of the Virgins it is said, That these who were found prepared went in; but the others were rejected. He then that is prepared, enters into Glory; and he that is not, is rejected. Our Lord

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Lord JESUS CHRIST will surprise all those that shall not be found watching, when he shall come in the Night, like a Thief that comes upon us suddenly.

IN the Time of the Deluge, there were but Eight Persons that were prepared, and entred into the Ark, to save themselves from drowning; all the rest were surprised, and drowned in the Waters. We must either perish, or dispose and prepare our selves to die well, since Death brings along with it Immutability; where the Tree falls, there it will abide.

NOW, of all Times, there is none less fit to dispose our selves to die well, than the Time *When Death approaches*; for Proof of which, innumerable Reasons might be adduced; But the most convincing of them all is, Experience, which daily sheweth us so many sudden Deaths of all Sorts; whereby Persons of all Ages, Sexes, and Conditions, are surprised. These certainly, are Arguments that convince both the knowing and the ignorant. There is not only Dan-

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ger, but as it were Certainty, of ruining our selves, by deferring and delaying our Conversion until that Time: Thou thinkest not of it, therefore thou shalt be surpris'd. It is certain, that the Time of Death's Approach, is the most troublefom and cumberfom of our Life. What shall arrive to all at the End of the World, happens to every one in particular at the Hour of his Death; that is, an irrevocable Change of State, or a Passing from Time to Eternity.

WHEN the poor dying Person is ready to pass out of the World, he tugs and feels nothing. His Soul will suffer, and cannot; His Breast riseth; he is not dead, neither is he living; The little Life that is left him, is only to put him in Pain. It is scarce possible, that he who minds only his Pain; should be in Condition to dispose himself for Death. Experience sheweth us; That a sick dying Man is not capable of the least Business; He is never more feeble, never less attentive; he knows not what Resolution to take; He grieves that ever he was born.

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born; he cannot tell what will become of him, if his Preparation be then to begin.

AT this Time, there will be no longer Means to redress any Thing that is amiss; there is no coming twice into it. It is decreed, That all Men must once die, and after Death Judgment. If I have not learned the Use of my Arms, before I come to the Battle, I shall not know how to fight when I must go to it. I must then exercise myself against the Combate. I must every Day prepare my self, because of the Uncertainty of my Departure. *The Number of our Years is uncertain, Job 15.*

THE Reason why GOD hides from Man his last Day, is, That he may prepare himself every Day. The First Preparation is, to live well, *Luke xii. 35.* A Man that has led an ill Life, can hardly expect a good Death. Take lighted Torches in your Hands, to keep you from being surpris'd; mortify your Senses, repress your Passions, disengage your Heart from criminal Affections towards Creatures: During the Time of your Pilgrimage;

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give good Example to your Children, Domesticks, and Inferiors : For at your Death, you must not only leave all, but you must also give an Account of your Sins, and of those which have been committed through your ill Example, or Neglect in correcting them. We must live every Day in the Midst of our Affairs, as at the Beginning and End. The Burning Torches, which our Lord would have us carry, signify the good Works wherewith we ought to be accompanied. He that put the Talent in the Napkin was rejected and cast into Darkness, as an unprofitable Servant. The Example teacheth us, That while we have Time, we must employ it in good Works, as being powerful Means to prepare us to die well.

WHEN you are engaged to make some long Journey, you provide yourself with all Things necessary. The Journey of Eternity is much longer than can be conceived, wherefore you must dispose of your Affairs. The present Estate is to work, the Future to be recompensed. We have the present
Life

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Life only to work in; and after this Life, there will be no longer Time to work. Let us live then To-day, as if we were to die To-morrow. In Life there are some Interests, in Death there are none. *That Man, saith St. Hieron, is no Christian, who will live one Day in such a State, as he would not die in.*

A good Death is not found by Chance; many Things are required of us in Health, in Order to attain it. We must daily examine well the State of our Souls, but more especially at certain Seasons set apart and proper for that Purpose, and not expect till the Night of Death comes, when no Man can work. This we ought to do, to the End we may remedy the Disorders, and whatever is amiss in our spiritual State. Again, we ought to make a full Confession of all our Sins, and truly repent of all our Misdeeds. For in a great Sicknes, it is difficult, yea, I may say morally impossible, to perform these religious Duties aright. A Man with-
out

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out Strength, cannot recal his Memory, nor reflect on his Conscience.

IN the next Place, When in Health you go to the holy Communion, go to it as if it were your last. For either you are an Infidel in not believing what GOD has said, or if you do believe him, you are very foolish and imprudent in not being obedient thereunto.

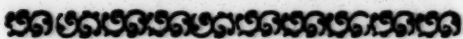
THE Soldier goes to Battle, the Woman is ready to ly in, the Merchant sets forth to Sea, they must all prepare for Death, because in these Circumstances, they are in evident Peril. And for this Purpose, many Obligations that have been omitted must be performed. If you have an Estate, and will dispose thereof, make your Will whilst you are in Health. We are not saved by designing to do good Works, but by doing them.

As thou despisest not the Grain which thou puttest in the Earth, so oughtest thou not to despise thy Body at the End of thy Life. Thus Joseph gave Command to his Brethren touching his Burial. Act by Advice, and keep good Order according to Charity and Justice: Pay
your

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your Debts, make Satisfaction to those you have wrong'd. **Do Works** of Mercy, spiritual and corporal. Choose yourself a spiritual Guide, that has Learning, good Conscience and Prudence. The Penitent has no less Need of a Physician for his Soul, than the Patient for his Body. Be careful so to clear your Conscience, that at the last Account you may have your Discharge, ready to produce in Judgment; having always that of the holy Apostle St. *John* in your Mind, *And the Dead are judged*, Rev. x. 12.



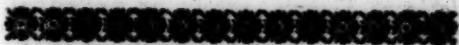


PREPARATION I.

1. *An Act of Conformity, or
Resignation to the Divine Will.*
2. *An Act of Faith, Adora-
tion, &c.*
3. *An Act of Hope.*

An Ejaculation to be used before
each of the Preparations, or the
Sections thereof.

IN the Name of the Father, and
of the Son, and of the Holy
Ghost. Amen. As I do not know the
Hour of my Death, nor whether I
shall have Time to prepare for it, nor
whether I shall have Strength, or
Knowledge, to apply my Mind to the
Affair of my Salvation: I humbly beg
thee, O my GOD, to accept of these Re-
solutions and Prayers, which I make
at present; and that thou wilt be gra-
ciously pleased to accept of this Prepa-
ration, for want of that which I possibly
may not be able to make at the End of
my Life. Amen. I. An



I.

An Act of Conformity or Resignation to the Divine Will.

I Know, O my GOD, that nothing comes to pass in this World, but by thy Order, and that a Hair of my Head does not fall to the Ground but by thy Permission, I know that thou loves me, and that thou dost not desire the Death of a Sinner, but willest that he be converted and saved. I know it is for my Good, that thou hast sent me this Sickness, and that no Creature can separate my Soul from my Body, if thou art not willing; I accept therefore of Death, and submit myself to thy Divine Will, and to whatever thou art pleased to appoint. I have nothing to ask of thee, but that thy Will be always done, and mine may never be done, if it is not conform to thine.

Be.

BEHOLD, O loving Father, the Cup of Death, which is presented to me by thy all-disposing Providence, and which appears to me to be very bitter ; Is there no way to be dispensed from it ? if it be possible let me not now drink it ; however, let thy Will be done, and not mine.

I feel, O loving Father, great Anguish both of Body and Mind, the Horrors of Death compass me on all Sides ; ——— O GOD, deliver me from these Torments, ease my Pains, restore my Health ; but in all this, let thy Will be done, and not mine.

Abandon the Care of my Body and Soul, to thy divine Disposition for Time and Eternity. If thou wilt call me out of this World to thy self, I am content, thy holy Name be praised. If thou wilt leave me in this World some Time longer to suffer and serve thee, I do not refuse any Labour, let thy Will be done, and not mine. O my GOD, my Heart is ready, my Heart is ready, ready to live, and ready to die ; ready to go to Heaven, ready to stay in this miserable World ; ready to do

do any Thing, ready to suffer any Thing. I have nothing to ask, nothing to say, I have nothing to desire, only that thy Will be done, and not mine.

O most gracious Father, who art in Heaven, where thou, I hope, expects me, and where thou hast prepar'd a Crown for me; let thy Name be hallowed and honoured by all thy Creatures. Let thy Kingdom come, and deliver me from the Slavery of the Devil, Sin and Death; let thy Will be fulfilled on Earth, as it is in Heaven; let me, and all that belong to me, my Body, my Soul, my Life, my Health, be disposed of without any Regard to my Inclination. Grant me only the Assistance of thy Grace, to fulfil thy holy Will. Permit not, O my GOD, that I yield to the Temptations of my Enemies, and deliver me from eternal Death, thro' the Merits of JESUS CHRIST, thy Son and Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, and the Holy Ghost, World without End. Amen.

II.

An Act of Faith, Adoration, &c.

O Sovereign and adorable Majesty, who hast placed me in this World to serve thee, honour thee, love thee, and keep thy Commandments; Behold me now stretched out on my Bed, ready to give up the Ghost, if thou so ordains it. I confess thou art my GOD, the sole Lord and Master of the World, the Author of my Being, the Object of all my Hopes, and the sovereign Good, who alone canst make me happy. I adore thee with infinite Respect, and submit myself to all the Truths which thou hast revealed.

I believe all the following Articles, and will defend the same to the End of my Life; viz. That there is one God, subsisting in Three Persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. That he created Heaven and Earth, that he hath given me a Being, to serve, honour and love him. I believe that

JESUS

JESUS CHRIST his Son our Lord, is true **GOD**, and true Man. That he reigns from all Eternity, as **GOD** with the Father, and that as Man he was born in Time, of the Virgin *Mary* his Mother. That he came into the World, to enlighten us by his Doctrine, to instruct us by his Example, to redeem us by his Death, to enrich us by his Merits, to sanctify us by his Grace, and to make us eternally Happy by his Glory. I believe that he rose again the Third Day after his Death, and ascended into Heaven, that he sits at the right Hand of **GOD** the Father, and it is before his Tribunal that I am going to appear, to give an Account of all the Actions of my Life.

I confess and acknowledge, that I have infinite Obligations to **GOD**, for all the Blessings bestowed upon me, and for all the Evils from which he has delivered me. I adore him with my whole Heart, and having a poor Life which I have employed almost in offending him; wherefore I declare now, that I am content to lose it,
that

that I may own his absolute Dominion over me, and by this render due Homage to his infinite Greatness and Majesty: That I may in some measure satisfy his Justice which I have offended by an Infinity of Crimes, that I may shew my Obedience to his sacred Decrees, which condemn me to die, That I may enjoy in Heaven his Divine Presence, That I may imitate his Son our LORD, and that I may give him some Marks of my Love and Gratitude. *Amen.*

O my GOD, my LORD, O Majesty infinitely adorable, behold me here prostrate with all the Humility that is possible. I confess and declare that I was in the wrong to offend Thee; that I deserve Death and eternal Damnation, and one Hell is too little to punish me. I submit my self with the most profound Respect to all the Dispositions Thou shalt appoint for me.

Those who are so miserable as to be condemn'd and lost, must own and acknowledge, that it is not Thou, my GOD, that art the Cause, but that it is the pure Effect of their own

own Malice, and that they have drawn that fatal Unhappiness on themselves by their own Infidelity, by their Obdurateness, and by the continual Resistance they have made to Thy Grace.

BUT, O most gracious GOD, altho' I am unworthy of thy Mercies, thro' the Multitude and Enormity of the Crimes which I have committed; I hope, however, O GOD of Mercy, That thou wilt grant me the Grace to save my Soul, in Consideration of the Tears and precious Blood which thy Son my Saviour shed for me: For I believe with a firm Faith, That he died for the Salvation of all Men, and for mine in particular; and it is upon this fundamental Truth of my Religion, that my Hope of being saved is grounded. O Lord, *I believe, help my Unbelief.*

I do not fear Death, O my GOD, but I apprehend, and am terrified for that which follows Death. I apprehend that eternal Duration of Good or Evil, which depends on a Moment, which I am wholly ignorant of, and which I cannot escape,

escape, but will be obliged to enter to that Place of Eternity. I fear that last Day, which will be the last of my Days here, and will be the First of Happiness or Misery, which will never have an End.

O Saviour of my Soul, who camest down from Heaven, upon Earth, to save Sinners, behold here the greatest of all, going to appear before thy Tribunal. I am content to be judged, provided thou put thy Cross betwixt my poor Soul and thy Justice; Look upon the Wounds thou hast received for my Salvation, and see what Expences I have put thee to; Search thy sacred Heart, and there thou wilt find what is sufficient to satisfy for the Punishment I deserve for my Crimes. Weigh my Soul in the Balance of thy Cross; remember that to seek me, thou madest so many Journies; That it was to give Life to me, that thou wast pleased to undergo so cruel a Death; and that it was to make me happy, that thou madest thy self the most miserable of all Men. Ah! do not lose

lose a Soul that has cost thee so much Blood, and so many Tears.

I am infinitely troubled for having offended thee; and for a Mark of my Sorrow, I chearfully submit to Death, with all the Inconveniencies of Sicknes. I am willing that this miserable Body, that has been defiled with so many criminal Pleasures, may suffer in this World, That the Spirit may be *saved in the Day of the Lord.*

I disown and detest all that the Frailty of Nature, the Violence of Pain, Force of Temptation, or Malice of the Devil may make me say or think, will or will not, against the Fidelity and Obedience I owe thee. I renounce also all the Suggestions of the Devil my Enemy; and I protest that I desire to die in a perfect Submission to all thy Divine Appointments. *Amen.*

I pardon all those who have offended me, and I humbly pray all those whom I have any ways offended, to pardon me; to the End that GOD may pardon us all. *Amen.*

III.

An Act of Hope.

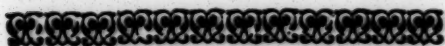
IT is in thee, O my GOD, that I only hope, because thou art my Father, my Creator, and my Redeemer; it is upon thy Goodness, and upon the Merits of thy Son JESUS, that I ground all my Hopes. Whatsoever Crimes I have committed, yet I will never despair, knowing that Despair is one of the greatest Sins that can be committed, and thou wouldst have pardon'd *Judas*, if he had had Recourse to thee, and have asked it. Save my Soul, O LORD, and deliver it from Hell, since I trust in thy Mercy. Let the Merits of thy only beloved Son, which he has transferr'd to me, supply my Deficiency, and grant that Favour and Mercy to his Satisfaction, which is no Ways due to mine.

Thou seest, O LORD, to what Extremity I am reduc'd, behold my Body born down with Pains, my under-

understanding fill'd with Darknes,
my Soul ready to depart from my
Body, and in danger to fall into
the Bottomless Abyſs, if thou doſt
not reach me thy Hand. There is
no Body can comfort me in my Af-
ſſiction, nor give Eaſe to my Grievs
and Pains, nor defend me in my
Conflicts; only thou, O my GOD,
my Refuge and my Deliverer, hear
thou my Prayer, be ſenſible of my
Anguiſhes, and deliver me from the
Danger I am in.

I recommend my Spirit to thee,
and put my Body and Soul into
thy Hands; Thou art a GOD of
Goodneſs, who has redeemed me, a
GOD of Truth, who never fails of
thy Promiſes. Haſt thou not pro-
tected and ſworn, that he who ſhall
put his Truſt in thee, ſhall not fall
into the Power of his Enemies, and
he that ſhall eat thy ſacred Body in
the bleſſed Sacrament, ſhall have e-
ternal Life: I have, by thy ſpecial
Favour and Grace, been a Partaker
of theſe holy Myſteries; may my
Body and Soul be thereby preſerved
unto eternal Life. I believe in thee,
and truſt in thy Mercy, do not per-
mit

mit me then to perish. Take me into thy Protection, and suffer not one of thy Servants to fall into eternal confusion, who has always hoped in thee. *Amen.*



PREPARATION II.

1. *An Act of the Love of GOD.*
2. *An Act of Contrition.*
3. *An Act of Thanksgiving.*
4. *An Act of Desire.*

In the Name of the Father, &c. as in Page 16.

I. *An Act of the Love of GOD.*

O How good is the GOD of *Israel!* O how sweet he is and amiable! He is liberal and patient. O my Soul, let all my Forces praise his Holy Name, for 'tis he that pardons all thy Offences, 'tis he who cures all thy Infirmities, 'tis he who has redeemed thee, and preserv'd thee from the Gulph of Death, 'tis he who crowns thee

thee with Graces and Mercies; 'tis he who satisfies thy Desires with abundance of good Things; 'tis he who renews thy Youthfulness as that of an Eagle, and clothes thee with Immortality.

O LORD, how much am I grieved for having offended thee? How could I ever abandon thee, who art the Source of infinite Comforts, to go to drink at the Cisterns of filthy Waters, where there was not one Drop of pure Water to quench my thirst? Wo to my Ignorance and Darknes! Wo to the Time that I did not love thee. I too soon offended thee, O Beauty always ancient and always new; I have too late loved thee, O Beauty always amiable and always bountiful! But 'tis better late than never. I will therefore, ever after, love thee my LORD, because thou art my Strength, my Support, my Refuge and my Deliverer. I will love thee, because thou hast loved me from all Eternity. I will love thee, because thou hast kept my Soul from the lower Hell, and because thou wast pleas'd to make thy self

miserable, to deliver me from eternal Misery: I will love thee, because thou hast given thy self for the Expiation of my Sins and Crimes. I will love thee, because there is nothing comparable to thee, and that thou only canst calm and fill the insatiable Desires of my Heart.

O GOD, who didst create me when I was a pure Nothing, O GOD, who hast redeemed me when I was a Slave, O GOD, who hast loved me when I was a Sinner, who hast saved me when I was lost, who hast sought me when I was gone astray, who didst pardon me when I was a Rebel! What shall I do to acknowledge these Benefits, and to make the Sentiments of my Heart known to thee. Thou hast said, that there cannot be a greater Love expressed for a Friend, than to die for the Person One loves, I then declare that I am willing to die, and I speak from my Heart and Lips, with one of thy Apostles, *Let us also go and die with him.* Let us die for him who died for us, let us die for his Love, let us die in his

his Love, and, if possible, let us die
the Death of Love. *Amen.*

II.

An ACT of Contrition.

ON whatsoever Side of my past
Life I look, Alas! it looks
to me very dreadful. The
Number of my Sins are infinite,
their Malice without Example, and
their Continuance has been as long
as my Life. What shall I do,
and whether shall I fly, O GOD
of all Goodness and Mercy? I
should abandon my self to Despair,
if I did not know that thou desirest
not the Death of a Sinner, but
that thou willest that he should be
converted and live.

Save me then, O my GOD, for
I confess that I am the greatest of
All Sinners; have Mercy on me ac-
cording to thy greatest Mercies,
wash me more and more, and
cleansc me from my Offences, for
my Sins are always before me,
and fill my Soul with Fears and
Trouble,

Preparation

Trouble, She reproaches me with my Perfidiousness and Ingratitudes, and tells me that I ought to die, since I have been so wicked as to offend thee.

O merciful Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee, I am not worthy to be called thy Child, it is too great a Honour to be of the Number of thy Slaves. I confess I am a sinful Creature, and for a Mark of my Grief, I consent that this Body which has been defil'd by so many filthy Crimes, should be cleansed by Sufferings.

BUT, What, LORD! dost thou cease to be my Father, because I have forgot that I was thy Child? Hast thou no longer the In-trails of a tender Father, which made thee deliver up thy only Son to Death for the Sake of Sinners? If I have done that which deserves Damnation, thou hast not lost that which can and will save me; do not then enter into Judgment, O GOD of Mercy, with thy poor Servant, for there is not one living, tho' never so Holy, who

who can be justified in thy Presence.

O Sweet JESUS! O Saviour of my Soul! O Comfort of the Afflicted! O Refuge of poor Sinners! I cast my self into thy Arms, and beg thee to be my Mediator with GOD thy Father; Remember, I pray thee, that it was' for Love of me that thou camest down from Heaven to Earth, and it was only for my Sake and to seek me, that thou madest so many Journeys, and it was to save me, that thou wast lifted up on the Cross; and it was to make me rich and happy, that thou becamest poor, and the most miserable of all Men. Thou wearied thy self in seeking for me, thou sheddest thy most precious Blood to redeem me, thou descendedst into Hell, (as it were) to draw me from thence. O. let not so many Steps, let not so many Labours, so many Prayers, so many Tears, let not so much Blood and Torments become fruitless and unprofitable.

Thou hast never despised a contrite and humble Heart. Thou

feelt mine pierced with Grief; look upon the Wounds which thou hast receiv'd for my Salvation, see whether thy Father is not satisfied, and whether the Payment does not exceed the Debt. O Saviour of Mankind, do not lose a Soul which thou hast lov'd so tenderly, and which has cost thee so much to save it. *Amen.*

III.

An Act of Thanksgiving.

I Give thee Thanks, O my GOD, for the innumerable Benefits bestowed upon me, and for the Evils thou hast preserv'd and delivered me from, in all my Lifetime. I thank thee, for that thou hast made all thy Creatures to serve me, and for having, while I lived, made the whole Universe labour to supply my Wants, and for my Satisfaction and Pleasure.

WHAT Favour is it, That I was born of Christian Parents! For thy having adopted me to be
one

one of thy Children? That thou hast fed me with the Body and Blood of thy own well-beloved Son in the blessed Sacrament, and for having fill'd me with thy holy Spirit? What shall I return thee, O my GOD, for that thou hast so many Ways enlightned my Understanding, for so many Comforts which thou hast poured into my Heart, for that thou hast pardoned me so many Sins, and for the Patience thou hast had to expect me, and bear with me so many Years. O my GOD, my Eternity is too little to praise thee for all these Mercies, and Graces. One Life is too short to love thee, and to acknowledge these so signal Mercies and Favours. If I had as many Days as I have liv'd already, I ought to sacrifice them all for thy Glory. But alas, I have but one Life, which is thine by several Titles, and yet I have spent it almost in offending thee; but what remains of it, O my GOD, and how miserable soever it is, I beg thee to accept of it, in Gratitude to thy Goodness. It does not depend on
me

me when to die, and when not; but I die as willingly, if thou so appointest, as if dying depended on my Will. I would ask to die as a Favour, to honour thee by the Sacrifice of my Life, and in some Measure to shew my Acknowledgment, and my Love to thee, by losing the Thing in the World, that's most dear to me.

IV.

An Act of Desire.

AS the Hart pants after the Water-Brooks, so let my Soul thirst after thee, O my GOD and my LORD. I rejoyced when it was said unto me, We are going to the House of our LORD. O fair *Jerusalem*! O holy City of *Sion*! whose Inhabitants are united together by the insoluble Bonds of Concord and Peace. O GOD of all Powers! How beautiful are thy Tabernacles! O how rich and how amiable! My Soul languishes away with the Desire
of

of entering into thy holy Palace,
in the Company of thy Angels.
O how happy are those who
dwell in thy House! they will
sing thy Praises to everlasting
Ages.

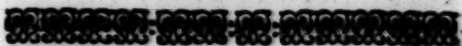
O GOD of Hosts, graciously
hear my Prayers, and look upon
the Face of thy CHRIST: For
to dwell one Day in thy House,
is better than to be a Thousand
Years in the Tabernacles of Sin-
ners. I am here upon the Banks
of the Rivers of *Babylon*, where I
mingle my Tears with these Wa-
ters. They bid me take my Harp
and play, *Sing to us a Song of*
Sion; but alas, how can I sing a
Song to our LORD in a strange
Country? O *Jerusalem*, O holy
Sion, let my right Hand forget her
Cunning, let my Tongue cleave to
the Roof of my Mouth, if I for-
get thee.

COME, Lord JESUS, come
quickly, call me out of this Ba-
nishment, take my Soul out of this
Prison, that it may bless thy holy
Name. The Just expect me, make
haste to call me to their Compa-

ny, that with them I may praise
and bless thee to all Eternity.

THIS is the Prayer that is
made to thee by the unworthiest
of all thy Creatures and Servants,
and who will die overwhelm'd
with Joy, because I die a Mem-
ber of the holy Catholick Church,
and in the Communion of Saints,
who serve thee on Earth, and
reign with thee in Heaven, where
I hope to see thee, and love thee
with them for ever and ever. Amen.





PREPARATION III.

PIOUS EXERCISES

On the Sufferings of our blessed
SAVIOUR.

1. *In the Garden of Olives.* 2. *At Cajaphas's House.* 3. *Carried to Herod.* 4. *Scourged in Pilat's Hall.* 5. *Crowned with Thorns.*

In the Name of the Father, &c.
as in Page 16.

I.

JESUS CHRIST in the
Garden of Olives.

Consider **JESUS CHRIST** in the
Garden of Olives, overwhelm'd with
Sadness, sweating Blood and Water
at the Sight of our Sins, and his fu-
ture Torments, and say to him,

O JESUS my Saviour, who didst
sweat Blood and Water, at
the Sight of the Sins which I have

committed.

committed, and in the View of these Torments, thou wast about to suffer; I thank thee for being despoiled of thy Force to strengthen us, for having taken our Fears upon thee, to encourage us. I adore thee bathed in thy Blood, and I detest all my Sins, which caused thee so much Sadness.

O blessed JESUS, the Joy of Angels and Men, I beseech thee, by the Agony which thou didst suffer in the Garden of Dolors, by the bloody Conflict which thou hadst with our rebellious Nature, and by the Victory which thou didst gloriously obtain over all that was opposite to our Salvation, I beseech thee by all these, to fortify me against the Terrors of Death, and against the Temptations of the Devil.

THOU knows, O LORD, and thou hast said it, *That the Spirit indeed is willing, but the Flesh is weak.* Give me then the Strength of thy Spirit, since thou didst take upon thee the Infirmary of my Flesh. O my Father, if it be thy holy Will, let this bitter Cup of Sickness,

ness and Death pass from me. Soften my Pains, let me live a little longer in the World, that I may unfeignedly repent for all my Sins. But, O gracious Father, let thy holy Will be done in all this, and not mine. I am content to suffer and die, if it be thy Will I should suffer; only, O LORD, grant of thy great Mercies my Sins may be pardoned, that I may be reconciled to my GOD, before I go hence, and be no more seen, thro' the Merits of our blessed Redeemer, who with thee, &c.

II.

Jesus at Cajaphas's his House.

Consider JESUS brought before Cajaphas, where he was accus'd, mocked, buffeted, and defiled with Spittle, as a Blasphemer, and as an impious Wretch, and casting your self at his Feet, say to him,

O JESUS, my LORD, who wast buffeted and ill used at the High Priest's House, where thy sacred Face was covered with their nasty Spittle, as the most impious
of

of all Mankind, and the greatest of Blasphemers! I adore, praise and bleſs thee, for having ſuffered theſe Injuries and Confuſions for my Sake. I am heartily ſorry for having injured thee ſo often in the Perſon of my Neighbour, for having ſpit on thy Face, and beat thee on the Cheek; becauſe whatever ill Uſage I have given my Neighbour, thou look'd on it as done to thee.

O Saviour of my Soul, I moſt humbly aſk thee Pardon, for the Outrages I have done thee in the Courſe of my Life. I accept moſt willingly of Death, and all the Pains I feel, or which thou ſhalt pleaſe to lay upon me, as the juſt Punishment of my Sins. And I moſt humbly beſeech thee, O moſt merciful Saviour, by the Dolors and ſhameful Confuſions which thou enduredſt all that Night when thou waſt in the merciless Hands of thoſe insolent Miniſters, not to abandon me to the Power of the Devil, my Enemies, when I ſhall be at the Point of Death; but I beg to be put under the Protection of thy Angels, altho'

altho' most unworthy, and that I may behold in Heaven that adorable Face, which was abused by Buffets and Spittle, caus'd by my impious, injurious, and dissolute Words, which I have too often spoke, to the Abuse and Scandal of my Neighbour.

III.

JESUS carried to Herod.

Consider **JESUS CHRIST** before King Herod, who asks him Questions, and solicites him to work a Miracle in his Sight: But our blessed **LORD** answered him not a Word, because he put St. John Baptist to Death, who was his Voice, and being an Adulterer, only required to satisfy his Curiosity.

Consider again how Pilate propos'd him to the Jews with Barabbas, and how the Jews prefer'd a seditious Wretch, a Thief, and a Murderer, to the **GOD** of Peace, and to the Author of Life. After this apply to **JESUS** with all the Respect and Tendernefs imaginable.

O **JESUS**, my sovereign **LORD**, who wast condemn'd by Herod
and

and the *Jews*! O! how I am troubled for having so many Times postponed thee to the Devil, and offended thee to enjoy a miserable Creature. I own I was highly in the Wrong for slighting thee in so horrible a Manner; and I deserve now, for the Outrage I have done thee, to be abandon'd by all Creatures, to be ill used by all Mankind; and to be forsaken by all my Friends. I willingly submit to whatever Sufferings thou shalt measure out unto me, and to die if thou so appointest; only let my Crimes be expiated by thy precious Death and Sufferings. *Amen.*

I V.

JESUS scourged in Pilat's Hall.

Represent to your Thoughts JESUS in Pilat's great Hall, where he is stripped and cruelly scourged by most barbarous Hangmen: See how he is cover'd with Wounds, and how they draw Blood from every Vein. At this

this Sight, if you can, strive to lament him with Tears of Blood, and then say to him with Grief,

O JESUS, the most pure and most holy of all Men, whose innocent Flesh was torn in Pieces by those cruel Stripes, for to expiate by thy Pains, those criminal Pleasures with which we have pamper'd our Bodies ! I am sorry from my Heart for the Wounds I have given thee, and which I have so often renewed by relapsing into my Sins. I accept for my Punishment, all the Pains I now endure, and Death it self, which I expect. I kiss with Respect the Rod with which thou chastisest my Irregularities. O most sweet Lamb, who takest away the Sins of the World, who wast, as it were, flea'd alive, and ready to be sacrificed on the Cross, I beseech thee by thy Dolors and grievous Pains which thou sufferdest by the scourging at the Pillar, to sanctifie my Body and Soul, and to wash them from all Filth, that I may be found worthy after my Death, to enter the heavenly Jerusalem, where

where nothing that is unclean can enter.

V.

JESUS crowned with Thorns.

Consider your Saviour in the midst of the Band of Soldiers, who platted a Crown of Thorns upon his Head, put a Reed in his Hand, and a scarlet Mantle upon his Shoulders, and in Derision prostrate themselves before him, spitting on his divine Face, and forcing the Thorns into his sacred Head. After you have ador'd him, then with great Sentiments of Grief, express your Sorrow.

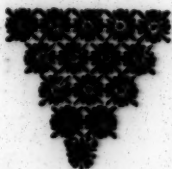
O JESUS the greatest of all Kings, and yet now the most contemptible of all Mankind; who wast crowned with Dolors and Ignominies, to satisfy for the Sins which we commit, by so many impure and ambitious Thoughts; I thank thee for being crowned with our Miseries, that thou mightst merit for us a Crown of Glory and Hap-

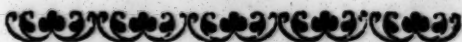
Happiness; I know now that thy Kingdom is not of this World, and that 'tis necessary to carry a Crown of Thorns here on Earth, that we may be fitted to carry a Crown of Gold and Glory in Heaven.

I have a Crown, O Lord, by thy Order, which gives me a great deal of Pain, which makes me feel the sharp Points which formerly pierced thy sacred Head. O! how these afflicting Thoughts torment my Mind! O! how many mortal Fears tear my Heart to Pieces; the pangs of Death compass me on all Sides. What can I do in this State, but only ask Pardon, O! merciful Saviour, for the Pleasure I have taken in wicked Thoughts, for the ill Designs I have formed in my Breast and Mind; for the Irreverences I have committed in thy Presence, particularly, in thy House of Prayer; for the Hypocrisies and deceitful Devotions with which I have covered my Dissimulation and Pride, kneeling as the Soldiers did in Derision before thee? As a Punishment for all this, I willingly accept of all the Pains of Body and
Mind

Mind which I endure; and I beseech thee, by thy Ignominies and Sufferings, to pardon me.

O Saviour of my Soul, let those Cords which bound thee, deliver me from the Captivity of the Devil: May that ignominious Robe, which covered thy sacred Body, be a Mean, that I may be cloth'd with a happy Immortality: And I beg, that that Crown of Thorns, which thou didst carry on thy Head, may procure me, after my Death, a Crown of Glory in Heaven. *Amen.*





PREPARATION IV.

Pious Exercises on the Crucifixion and Death of JESUS.

In the Name of the Father, &c.
as in Page. 16.

I.

JESUS crucified.

Consider thy Saviour nailed to a Cross, where he prays for his Enemies, where he promises Paradise to a Thief; Where he recommends his Mother to the dearest of his Disciples; and where he again recommends this dear Disciple to his holy Mother; Where he is abandon'd by his Father, blasphem'd by the Thief, insulted by the Priests, mock'd and scoffed at by the Jews and Gentiles. After having consider'd him in this deplorable Condition, adore him with Body and Mind, and say to him,

O Saviour of Mankind! **O** Redeemer of all Sinners! **O** high Priest of the new Law! **O** Judge
C of

of the Living and of the Dead! I adore thee on the Theatre of thy Dolors and Ignominies. I prostrate my self before the Throne of Mercy. I give Thanks to thee, for having pray'd for me in praying for thy Enemies, for I was the greatest among them, and thou hadst me then in thy Thoughts; Thou didst try to excuse the *Jews*, who put thee to Death, alledging that they did not know what they did; but for me who have nail'd thee to this Cross by the Sins which I have committed with so much Knowledge; I that have so many times crucified thee in my Heart, knowing well that thou wert my God, my Father, and my King; I who have so many Times acknowledged my Fault, and promised not to fall again; What can I say for my Defence? What Reason canst thou, O powerful Advocate, alledge to God thy Father to excuse me? O miserable! I am without Excuse, and do not deserve Pardon.

But, O merciful GOD and Saviour, I hope for Pardon, of thy Bounty, seeing thou hast pray'd
for

for me, and that I see before my Eyes that thou didst pardon a Thief, and didst shed thy Blood for my Salvation. Thou knowest that I am not in a Condition to do any Thing towards appeasing thy Anger, or satisfying thy Justice; but what comforts me, is, That I am still in a State of Suffering: For behold me here, O LORD, as upon a very painful Cross, to which my Sins have nailed me.

O JESUS, I desire to die upon this Cross for thy Glory, and for the Punishment of my Sins, I desire to be sacrificed on this Bed of Sickness where I now ly; I desire to offer all the Blood that is in me, all the bitter Remedies I am forced to take, all the sharp Pains which I suffer, in Memory of that Blood which thou hast shed for me, in Memory of the Vinegar and Gall which was given thee to drink, and in Memory of those bitter Torments which thou didst endure for my sake.

I I.

The Death of JESUS.

Represent to your self the Saviour of the World upon a Cross, where, after having consummated the Work of our Redemption, after having suffered all that the Rage and Malice of Men could make a GOD endure, and all that a Man-GOD could suffer from the Fury of Men, after having been (as it were) flea'd to the Bone, abandon'd by his Friends, cruelly persecuted by his Enemies, overwhelm'd with Pains, and intirely drain'd of Blood, after having recommended his Spirit to his Father, and cry'd with a loud Voice, It is finished, he bowed down his wearied Head, and gave up his Soul to GOD: Prostrate your self, both Body and Soul, and, touch'd with a lively Sentiment of Sorrow, say to him,

O JESUS our divine Pastor, who cam'st down from Heaven to our World, to seek the lost Sheep, and who gavest up thy self

self as a Prey to the Wolves, to preserve it from Death! O Son of the living GOD, who hast shed thy Blood, and given thy Life to redeem Mankind from the Slavery of the Devil, to deliver them from eternal Death, and to make them partakers of thy Happiness; I humbly give thee Thanks for thy incomparable Love, which made thee load thy self with the immense Weight of our Sins, and with all the Pains due to them.

I give Thanks to thy sacred Heart, for having been afflicted for my sake, and for being plung'd in a Sea of Dolors, to merit for me the inestimable Pleasures of his Glory. I thank those sweet and charming *Eyes*, which have shed so many Tears for my sake, and which extinguish'd, by a Deluge of Weeping, the Fire of the Anger of GOD, which was just going to consume me. I thank thy sacred *Mouth*, for having drunk Vinegar and Gall in Punishment of my Intemperances, and the shameful Excesses of my Tongue and Appetite. I thank thy adorable *Head*, for permitting

it to be pierced with so many mortal Pricks, to cure the Wounds of my Ambition and Pride. I thank those *Hands*, which have done so much good, and those charitable *Feet*, that would let themselves be bor'd with such rough Nails, and all this endur'd to repair the Evils I do, and the Negligence I have been guilty of in doing Good. In fine, I thank thy most pure and innocent Body, for permitting it to be torn in Pieces by Scourges, in order to expiate those impure Pleasures, and abominable Impurities of my Life past.

What can I do, O divine Master, to acknowledge the Charity which caus'd thee to give thy Life, and die for me; altho' I had an Infinity of Lives, I could neither equal the Price of thy blessed Life, nor could I satisfy the least Obligation which I owe thee. O divine Redeemer! I have but one Life, and tho' 'tis true, it is not in my disposal, but in thine, it not being in my Power to prolong it a Minute; however, I am willing to lose it, and I offer it to thee,

O Saviour of my Soul, and beg thee to accept of it, how unhappy and unfit soever it is, and defil'd with many more Crimes than I have lived Days in the World.

O Father of Heaven, I recommend my Soul into thy most merciful Hands, both for Time and Eternity.

I accept of Death, to honour thee by the Sacrifice of my Life, and to testify by this Sort of Annihilation, that I am nothing before thee.

I accept of Death for an Acknowledgment, as much and as far as I am able, of the infinite good Things which thou hast given me while in the World, for the Graces with which thou hast prevented me; for the Dangers thou hast deliver'd me from; for the Sins thou hast pardoned me; and above all, for having expected me with so much Patience; and for so often having visited me, by bestowing on me thy sacred Body and Blood at the sacred Table of thy own Institution.

I accept of Death, to satisfy thy Justice, which I have provoked by an Infinity of Crimes, by Relapses, and by perfidious Practices; and by the Abuses of all those Graces, which thou hast so profusely heaped upon me.

I receive Death, that I may give thee some Token and Sign of my Obedience, in submitting to the Sentence thou hast pronounced against me, and in Obedience to thy Divine Will, by which thou hast ordained that I shall die.

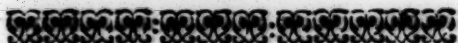
I accept of Death, O blessed JESUS, that I may drink of thy Cup, to imitate thy Example, to express my Love, and that I may sooner enjoy the Glory of thy Divine Presence.

O JESUS, my GOD, my Father, and my Sovereign Lord and King, I implore thee by thy Death and Pains, to bless mine, and sanctifie what I endure; do not abandon me, tho' I should be deprived of all human Help and Assistance. Do not abandon me, for all the Devils will do their utmost Efforts to ruine me; send to my Succour and Defence

fence the Prince of the Heavenly Host. Deprive me, if thou wilt have it so, of all human Comfort, but do not deprive me of thy Grace. If thou shalt abandon me for a Time, do not abandon me for Eternity.

I will now say at this Moment, what perhaps I shall not be able to say at my dying Moments, My Father, into thy Hands I commend my Spirit, which created it, and which were bored thro' for my Sake; O eternal Father, I repeat once more, that I commend my Soul and Salvation unto thee, and I abandon my self to thee without Reserve, both for Time and for Eternity.





PREPARATION V.

Pious Exercises upon the Lord's Prayer.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, &c. as in Page 16.

Our Father.

I BELIEVE, O my GOD, that thou art my Father, who hast given me the Life of Nature and Grace, and from whom I expect that of Glory; I rejoyce with my self, for having so Wise, so Great, so Powerful, and so Good a Father, and I am exceedingly griev'd for having degenerated from my Being, and for having made my self the Slave of the Devil.

O adorable Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee, I am not worthy to bear the Character of a Child of thine, but receive me I beseech thee, among the
Num-

Number of thy Servants ; and treat me as one of the meanest of thy Hirelings. I am that Prodigal Child who have dissipated all the Goods of Nature and Grace, which thou hast given me, and who now return to thee spent and weary with Wants and Miseries: Receive me, *Father* of Mercy, into thy Family, and do not throw me eternally out of thy Presence, Thy Son our Saviour has assured me, That it was for Sinners that thou sent him into the World ; pardon then a poor Sinner who asks Mercy, and do not destroy a Soul for which thy beloved Son suffered infinite Torments and Death.

O *Father*, if it seem good unto thee, let this bitter Cup of Sickness and Death pass from me without drinking it. Deliver me from the Pains which I feel, and restore me to my Health, that thro' thy Grace I may perfect my Repentance, and be reconciled to my GOD ; However, let thy Will be done, not mine ; only in Life or Death, grant I may be always and for ever thine. *Amen.*

Who art in Heaven.

THOU *art in Heaven*, O my **GOD**, and I am on Earth; thou art in a Place of Peace, and I am in a Place of Battle. Thou *art in Heaven*, as it were to recompense me, and I am placed here to serve thee, Wicked and Undutiful as I am. I hope, O **GOD** of Mercy, that thou wilt receive me into Paradise, and I ground my Hopes in the Merits of thy Son **JESUS**, and on the precious Blood he shed for me.

O! when will that Day come, which I so much desire, the most pleasant and happy of all others? O how the World displeases me, when I cast an Eye to Heaven! O Paradise! what ought not one to do, to gain thee? What ought not one to suffer to enjoy thee? All that I endure or can suffer, is nothing to the Price of that I hope for. Happy, O my **GOD**, are those who live in thy House, they shall bless and praise thee for ever and ever.
Amen.

Hal-

Hallowed be Thy Name.

MOST holy, and most adorable Name of my **GOD**, I was not placed in the World, but to honour thee, and I have done nothing while I have liv'd hitherto, but blasphemed and committed Outrages against thy holy Name. I have laboured for nothing, but to glorify my self, and by a most horrible Attempt desir'd to mount thy Throne, to be admir'd by the Creatures. I was Wicked, and yet desir'd to appear good; tho' fill'd with Crimes I affected, by a detestable Hypocrisy, an Air of Virtue and Piety, which I had not. I crave thy Pardon, O King of Glory and Majesty, and I beseech thee, by thy sacred Name, to have Mercy on me, for the Merits of our blessed Redeemer, who with thee and the Holy Ghost livest and reignest, one **GOD** for ever. *Amen.*

Thy

Thy Kingdom come.

W H E N will it be, O my GOD, that *thy Kingdom will come*? When wilt thou Reign peaceably in my Heart? When wilt thou be absolute Master of my Body and Soul? I have been an Enemy to thy reigning here upon Earth, I have protested all my Life with the *Jews*, that I would have no other King than *Cesar*, and for this I deserve to die; I accept Death most willingly in punishment of my Rebellion and Perfidiousness; and altho' I am among the most wicked and scandalous of all Mankind, I beseech thee notwithstanding, not to cast me out of that Kingdom of Peace and Holiness from whence all Scandals are banished.

M Y Soul, comfort thy self; behold the *Kingdom* of GOD approaches, thou hast but a Moment to suffer, and this Moment of Suffering will produce for thee an eternal Weight of Glory. Fight courageously to the End, and do
not

not lose by thy Cowardliness, a Crown which is promised and prepared for thee in Heaven.

Thy Will be done, &c.

O my GOD, since I have not done *thy Will* in my Lifetime, grant that I may at least do it at my dying Moments. Is it *thy Will* that I should suffer here? Is it *thy Will* that I should live! Is it *thy Will* that my Pains should be prolonged? Is it *thy Will* that they should end? My Heart is ready, O LORD, my Heart is ready, to do or suffer all that shall best please thy Divine Majesty. It is ready to live, it is ready to die; all I desire and ask is, that *thy Will* be always done, and that mine may never be done, if it be contrary to thine.

Give us this Day, &c.

I give thee Thanks, O compassionate Father, for having given me so many Years Substance for my Body, and the supernatural Food
of

64 Preparation

of thy Grace for the Support of my Soul ; but principally for having given me so frequently the *Bread* of Angels, which is the sacred Body and precious Blood of thy Son, to procure me eternal Life.

H A P P Y those who shall eat of this *Bread* in the Kingdom of GOD! O *Bread* of Life! I now fear Death no more, since I have had the Happiness to partake of this sacred Food. I do not fear my Enemies any longer, because thou art with me. Thus fortified with this *Bread*, I will walk thro' the Desert of this Life, till I arrive at the Mountain of GOD. Thou hast declared, O Saviour of my Soul, that he who shall eat of this *Bread*, shall live for ever. Thou canst not deceive us ; those who have been united to thee in this Life, how can they be separated from thee after Death ?

O J E S U S! Give me this Day, which may perhaps be the last Day of my Life, the *Bread* and Food of thy Grace. Support my Weakness, strengthen me with thy Succours, for fear of falling, and lest I should die in the Way, if I am not
fed

fed and nourished with thy heavenly Bread.

Forgive us our Trespases.

I am terrified, O LORD, at the Sight of my Sins; the Number of them is infinite, and the Malice extremely great. What shall I do to secure my Salvation? I cannot pray, fast, repent or perform any Duty aright, without thy Grace. Thou hast promised, O eternal Truth, that thou wilt pardon him that will *forgive others*, that thou wilt shew Mercy to him who will do it to others. I pardon, with all my Heart, such who have offended me. I beg of thee, for thy Mercy's Sake, not to impute this Evil to them, which they have done me. Pardon me also, O just and merciful GOD, and do not remember my Offences, so as to punish them. Grant this for the Sake of our blessed Redeemer, who, &c.

And

And lead us not, &c.

ALAS ! What Danger am I in of perishing, if thou dost not succour me, for behold Hell ready open under my Feet to swallow me up ; behold the roaring Lion round me, and ready to devour me : But however, altho' I walk in the Shades of Death, yet I will fear nothing, since thou art with me.

But deliver us, &c.

DELIVER me, O my GOD, from corporal Evils which I feel, and which I have justly deserv'd ; deliver me from those of the Soul, which I ought to fear, and with which I am threatned ; deliver me from the greatest of all Evils, which is Hell. O GOD of Mercy, do not throw me into that Place of Torments, do not condemn me to eternal Death : For alas ! Who can dwell with everlasting Burnings ! How can I be separated from thee for an Eternity !
Receive

Receive me, O most merciful Father, into Paradise, where I shall praise, bless and give Thanks to thee with the glorious Company of Saints for ever and ever, through the Merits of our blessed LORD and Saviour JESUS CHRIST, who with thee, &c.



PREPARATION VI.

Ejaculations for strengthening a sick Person against the Terrors of Death.

In the Name of the Father, &c.
as in Page 16.

N. B. *That Fear is Good whilst we are living, but 'tis dangerous at our Death, especially when it is excessive; because it troubles the Mind, closes the Heart, and hinders it to produce those Acts of Hope and Love, so necessary to be made at that Time; besides*

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sides, the Devil makes Use of Fear, to throw the Soul into Despair, by representing to it the Heinousness of its Crimes, and the Rigour of GOD's Judgments.

To avoid so fatal and so dangerous a Rock, it is necessary to prepare for this last Combat, and to fortify our selves by these following Considerations.

MY Soul, how comes it that thou art so sad? What Reason hast thou to apprehend Death? Dost thou know whither thou goest, or the Place which is prepared for thee? Thou art going to finish thy Banishment, and to return to thy dear Country, where JESUS CHRIST thy Redeemer, and all the heavenly Host, are waiting to receive thee.

You go to a Marriage-Feast, where all your Wishes shall be satisfied, and where you shall be inebriated with a Torrent of Delight.

You go to enjoy the Pretence of GOD, and possess your sovereign Good, which created you to enjoy him.

Y O U

Y O U are going to pass from Time to Eternity, from Figure to Reality, from Change to Immutability, from Death to Immortality, and from Misery to Felicity.

Y O U are going to the House of our LORD, to remain in a Land of the Living, to reign in a Paradise of Glory, and to swim in an Ocean of Pleasures.

You are going to see that which the Eye never saw, to hear what the Ear never heard, and possess what the Heart of Man could never conceive.

You are going in to a Country, where you will find all that you can desire, and where you will meet with nothing of what you fear; where you will be no more capable of Sin, nor in Danger of losing your Soul, where you will see GOD as he is, and with him possess all you can wish.

COURAGE, then, Christian Soul, quit this mortal Life, leave this miserable Body where you have been so long Prisoner. What do you apprehend or fear? **JESUS** died for you, he has satisfied for your Sins,
he

he has paid all your Debts, he is Bail for you with his Eternal Father, he promises you Heaven, provided that you hope in him. 'Tis true, you have done little or no Good, but comfort your self, your Redeemer has done for you. You have not suffered any Thing for him, but he has suffered a great Deal for you. He has given up to you his Title to the Kingdom of Heaven, which his Sufferings procured him. He has made a Transfer of all his Merits to you. He has associated you in his Victories and Inheritance. He has sworn, that he who eats his Body, shall not die eternally; and have not you received the sacred Symbols? What do you fear then, having such Pledges of his Promises and Love?

If he had design'd to damn you, would he have died for you? would he have preserv'd your Life so long, and expected you with so much Patience? Would he have given you Time to think, and to ask Pardon of him for your Sins? Would he have visited you in your Sickneſs? Would he have come
from

from Heaven for your Sake ? would he have come into your House, if he had not a Design to receive you into his ?

I F you grieve from the Bottom of your Heart, you will not be lost, but all your Offences will be pardoned. A sincere Repentance is always in Season. One can never be converted too late, when he is sincerely converted.

LET us go then, O Christian Soul, let us die with **CHRIST JESUS** ; hearken how he calls on you, and reaches forth his Hands and Arms to embrace you. See him upon the Cross, who still prays for you, and recommends you to his Father. Observe how he asks Pardon for all such as caused his Death, and are not you of that Number ?

OBSERVE again how he bows down his Head ; it is for nothing else than to give you the Kiss of Peace ; see how he stretches forth his Arms, but 'tis for no other Design than to embrace you. You see his Heart is laid open, to give you Entrance : He has shed all his Blood to redeem and save you, will
not

not you then give him some Tokens and Signs of your Love and Gratitude? You cannot give a more sensible one, than to die for him.

Y O U are content to die: Die then, since **G O D** wou'd have it, die for the Glory and Love of **J E S U S**; die to acknowledge his Benefits; die to satisfy his Justice; die for him, since he died for you; die that you may obtain a Sight of him; since 'tis certain you can't see him if you do not first die: But be not weary of Suffering; you have but a Moment to suffer, and you shall have a whole Eternity to rejoyce in. **O Death!** the Thoughts of thee are pleasant to those, to whom Life is troublesom and bitter; **O** how pleasant it is to die, when we care no longer to live.

A P R A Y E R



A PRATER to be used by a
sick or dying Person, or by
those who visit such, with
some Variation.

O GOD the Father of Heaven,
have Mercy upon me now,
and at the Hour of my Death -----
O God the Son, have, &c. -----
O God the Holy Ghost, have, &c. ---
By the Mystery of thy holy Incar-
nation, Nativity, and Circumcision,
by thy Baptism, Fasting and Temp-
tation, Grant me a happy Death.---
By all the Labour, and all the Af-
fliction of thy Life, by that Sweat of
Blood thou was drench'd in, and by
the Sadness of thy sacred Heart, in the
Garden of Gethsemane, Grant me a
happy Death.----- By the Torments
of thy Passion, by the Wounds with
which thy innocent Flesh was covered,
by the cruel Thirst thou suffered on the
Cross, by the terrible Dereliction of thy
D holy

holy Soul, by thy Death and Agony,
Grant me a happy Death.

THAT it may please thee to pardon me all my Sins, and that thou mayst grant me of thy pure Goodness, the Grace to die well. I beseech thee to hear me, good LORD.

THAT it may please thee to assist me at my Death, to defend me against the Temptations of my Enemies, and to receive my Soul into Heaven at its leaving my Body. I beseech, &c.

THAT it may please thee to deliver me from the Snares of the Devil, to tie up in Chains that strong armed Adversary, and do not permit me to fall under his Power. I beseech, &c.

THAT it may please thee to deliver me from the Temptation of Infidelity and Presumption, of Fear or Despair. I beseech thee, &c.

THAT it may please thee to deliver me from the Temptation of Sadness, Murmuring and Impatience, and too great a Desire of recovering my Health. I beseech, &c.

WHEN in my last Sickness, I come to be abandon'd of all human Help, do not then, O Lord, leave me to myself.

When I am without Strength,
Can-

Courage or Comfort, do not go far from me, O Lord. --- When my Understanding shall be plunged in Darkness, my Heart in Sadness, my Body in Pains, visit me then, O Lord, and support me in my Affliction.

When the Devils present themselves, to tempt and fright me, to accuse and to destroy me, when my Soul shall be in Conflict with the Pangs of Death, when she shall remove from my Body; O good Jesus, receive me into thy Mercy, and permit me not to perish.

I am heartily sorry and grieved, for having offended thee; O my GOD, I submit to all the Chastisements which thy Justice shall please to inflict upon me, and I desire sincerely to love thee when I die, since I have not loved thee as I ought whilst I lived. --- I am willing to die, for the Glory of GOD, and to testify by this Sacrifice of my Life, that I love thee more than my self. --- I am willing to die, to shew how ready I am to obey thy Orders, and to submit to the Decree which thou hast pronounced against me, and all Mankind. I desire to die, that I may see thee, that

I may possess thee, that I may praise and love thee to all Eternity.

I am willing to die, that I may never more offend thee, since I see I cannot live here without offending thee. I am willing to die in Thanksgiving, for all the Benefits which thou hast bestowed on me in Time; and for those too, which I hope to enjoy with thee for all Eternity.

O Lord, most merciful, bestow on me eternal Life, and may thy glorious Light shine on me for ever. Amen.





Serious Considerations

In Order to Holy

LIVING and DYING :

On the following SUBJECTS.

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1 Human Life, | 5 Repentance, |
| 2 Salvation, | 6 The Christi- |
| 3 Devotion, | ans Pattern, |
| 4 Prayer, | 7 Death. |

C H A P I.

1 *On the Shortness of Human Life.*

MAN's Days are short. We must leave behind us what we possess and see ; and do we seriously reflect on't, in a little Time we shall be summon'd to appear before a dreadful Judge.. Are our Accompts ready ? We shall die very shortly, and is it not strange we think so little on it ? Let us not rely on the Advantage of Youth ; Thousands and Thou-

lands have been cut off in that Age. Let us not depend on a good *Constitution*, when the strongest bodied Men have been surprized by Death.

LIFE is *very short*; how many are strangl'd in their Mother's Womb? How many overlaid in their tender Infancy? How many cut off in their riper Years? Daily Experience makes it appear, that there are many more die before Thirty, than live to that Age. But suppose we allow Fourscore Years, is not Man's Life still very short? One Half of it is absolutely lost; to wit, that of our Infancy and Childhood, and that which we lose in Sleep, and uneasie old Age.

TAKE the best Part of our Lives, all that is *past* is no more than a Dream; the *present* remains but a Moment, and what is it? In some 'tis taken up in laborious Employments, in restless Projects; by others in Vanity, Excess and Sin; by many 'tis spent in Anger, and Vexation; by others, in Anguish, Grief and Tears: A sad Life, and very short.

A Drop

A Drop of Water in regard to the Sea, a Spot of Ground in comparison to the Earth, is more than Life, if compared to Eternity. Hear the Judgment of the Damned on the Shortness of human Life; *What has Pride profited us? Or the boasting of Riches, what has it brought us? All these Things have passed away like a Shadow, and as a Ship on the floating Waters; as a Bird on the Wing, or an Arrow sent to its destin'd Place, so we, born, soon ceased to be.* Wisd. 5. Are not our Thoughts the same? Who will barter an eternal Weight of Glory, for the transitory Things of this short Life?

EXAMINE your selves, and remember your Lives are short, and very short: Let this be a Motive to the fixing your Hearts on an eternal Life, for which you were created; a Life which is the Happiness of the Saints and Angels.

2 *On the Miseries of Human Life.*

MAN born of a Woman is full of many Miseries. No Tongue is capable of summing up the Diseases, Misfortunes, or Infirmities, which so often and cruelly rack the Body: What more common than the Stone, Gout, or a Fit of the Cholick? What more usual than to have an Arm, Thigh, or Leg broke? How many lame and decrepit are there in perpetual Torment? What bodily Hardships does the Soldier, the Merchant, the Mechanick undergo? Are not these Miseries? Why then are we so fond of this wretched Life, and fond to an Excess too, to the Destruction of our Souls?

CONSIDER the afflicting Passions of the Mind. How often are we dejected by uneasie *Melancholy*? How often overcome with bitter *Grief*? With *Grief* at the Loss of a Child

a Child, or Parent, with *Grief* at the unkind Usage of Neighbours? How often are our Hearts gnaw'd with *Envy*, oppress'd with *Fear*, *Anger* and *Hatred*? A sad Life! to be beset on all Sides with merciless Enemies; and yet that it should be so generally caress'd, that reasonable Men should shake Hands with its Miseries. What can we think?

THE Soul has her Miseries too: She is blind in her *Understanding*, depriv'd in her *Will*, obstinate and perverse; she is corrupted in her Judgment, decay'd in her Memory, feeble in all her Faculties. How many poor Souls are betray'd to the World, are Slaves to the Devil, and liable to his Torments! Are not these the greatest Miseries? Ah! Let us repent of past Offences, and earnestly labour for that blessed Country, where we may see and love, love and praise, praise and rejoyce, - for ever and ever. *St. Aug.*

EXAMINE your selves, and take care you forfeit not the Life to come, by criminally providing for
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this present one, which is every Way full of Misery. Decline Sin, vigorously pursue the Cause of GOD, and your Souls. Thus will you happily begin a Life on Earth, which shall never end.



C H A P. II.

I *On the Affair of Salvation.*

GOD has created us without our selves, but he will not save us unless we concur.

St. Aug. Our Souls are our own, and it is our own Business to save them: A Person that has a Suit at Law, may by Means of an Advocate carry his Cause: A Prince may become Victorious by the Valour of his Generals; but 'tis not so in the Affair of Salvation. It is true, we shall be arraigned before an Almighty Judge; but we must plead our selves. Are we prepared
for

for it? We have the World and Devils, mighty Enemies, to engage with; and we must fight our own Battles, are we able to do it?

WHAT should we think of the Man, who being very active in soliciting for his Friend, tho' in the Matter of a Trifle, carelessly at the same Time lets fall his own Cause, upon the Success whereof, Life and Fortune entirely Depends? And is it not surprising, that this should be the general Case of Mankind? How many solicitously provide for this foolish World, to the prejudice of their Souls? How many lose their Time in vain Amusements, when they should be working out their own Salvation with Fear and Trembling? Alas! did we but take a Quarter of that Pains the Farmer undergoes in cultivating his Land; the Merchant for purchasing a little Dust; the Courtier to gain the Goodwill of his Prince; the Gentleman in order to support his Family; we should all be Saints.

WERE

WERE a damned Soul permitted to return to Life, what would it not undergo to save it self? Would it grumble at Providence because afflicted? O would it not rather resignedly rejoyce in its Sufferings, and make them the Instruments of its future Glory? Would it think Prayer tedious, or Repentance unnecessary? Would it a second Time follow the Suggestions of a corrupt World, and neglect its Eternity? No certainly.

EXAMINE your selves, and let it be your Concern to save your Souls. You were created for this End: It is your one Thing necessary, without which you are lost, and lost for ever.





2. *The Salvation of our Souls our greatest Affair.*

THE Salvation of our Souls is our greatest Affair. The overthrowing an Enemy, the purchasing an Estate, the Management of a Kingdom, are Matters of Concern, but nothing if compared to the Business of Salvation: The best Things in the World die with us; but our Souls are immortal: They will most certainly be eternally happy or miserable. If we lose our Souls, we lose GOD and All; all is lost, and without Hopes of Recovery. *Ab, my GOD!* to lose thee is my greatest unhappiness: To lose thee for ever is a dismal Subject of deep Despair: To lose thee for a base Pleasure is a shameful Folly.

What does it avail a Man, if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? or what can a Man give

give in Exchange for his Soul? says our blessed Saviour in *Mat. xvi.* Let the World smile upon him; Let him be mounted to the Pinnacle of Honour; Let him enjoy what his Heart can possibly thirst after in this Life; it will avail him nothing, if he lose his Soul.

WHEN our departing Hour shall come (and 'tis certain it will come, tho' how soon we know not) shall we be able to comfort our selves with the Thoughts, that we have been successful in the Affairs of the World; that we have vainly aggrandiz'd our selves, and made a good Provision for Wife and Children, while the *main Business of Eternity* has lain unregarded? No, we shall repent (and perhaps too late) our unhappy neglect: We shall be sensible of the Waste of Time, of that precious Time given us for the saving our Souls: We shall be convinced that the World is *Vanity and Vexation of Spirit, Eccl. 2.* And we shall bewail our Misfortunes, that on account of these Follies we have forfeited our Happiness.

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EXAMINE your selves, and let the Affair of Salvation be your *greatest Concern*. Place it daily before your Eyes, husband well your Time, and think it all little enough to purchase Heaven in. Remember you are marching betwixt two Eternities, choose that now which you would choose at the Hour of Death. *Spare nothing to spare your Souls.* S. Hierom.



3. *The Salvation of our Souls our only Affair.*

THE Salvation of our Souls is our *only Affair*. It must be so, since it has been the sole Design of the most *blessed Trinity*. **GOD** the Father has created us after his own Image; he has given us a Will, Memory and Understanding, that by serving him we may *save our Souls*. **GOD** the Son was made Man, he led a painful Life, and died upon a Cross: And why?
that

that redeeming us from Sin, we might every one be *saved*. GOD the Holy Ghost has called us to the *true Faith*, he has sanctified us by his Graces, and afforded us fair Opportunities of doing good; and for this very End, to *work out our Salvation*.

THUS hath the Blessed Trinity every Way concurr'd to save our Souls. Onething is necessary, says our dearest Saviour, *Luke x.* Yes, the *saving our Souls* is absolutely necessary; all depends upon it.

We shall one Day appear before the *Tribunal* of CHRIST, to give in at the Bar, a full Account of our Lives. Will it serve our Turn to make this Kind of Plea, LORD, we have done great Things; We have gain'd the Esteem and Applause of Men; We have heap'd up Riches; We have followed our Inclinations; We have spent our Time in jovial Divertisements; We have been kind to our Neighbours; We have neglected nothing but the *Concern of Salvation*? Will this do? And yet, can the greater Part of Mankind give in a better Account? No, they will

will not be able, till they change their Lives.

THE Saints were wise, they esteem'd their Salvation their *only Business*, and therefore they spent their Lives in preparing for *Eternity*: And can we think of going to Heaven, without taking pains for it? O merciful GOD, pardon our past Neglects: Our Lives for the future shall manifest a *Change of Heart*, we will save our Souls; we are resolved upon it: But let thy Grace make our Resolutions fruitful.

EXAMINE your selves, and see whether the Affair of your Souls be your *only Affair*: Remember you have but one *dear Soul*, and if you lose it, 'tis lost for ever. Allow your Souls but half that Time which you throw away upon a wicked World, and you'll be glorious Saints.



4. On the Difficulty of Salvation.

THE saving our Souls is a *hard Task*. This Truth will evidently appear, if we reflect on the many and implacable Enemies we are unavoidably to engage with. How many *violent Passions* must be retrench'd! How many *inveterate Habits* are to be overcome, before we can enter Heaven? How strict a Watch are we to keep over our *Senses*? How many dangerous Occasions to be shun'd, in order to Salvation? Does not this require indefatigable Labour, Great Grace?

THE *World*, the *Flesh* and the *Devil* must be subdued; the *World* strives all it can to allure us by Promises, to gain us by Threats, to seduce us by its Maxims, to corrupt us by Example.

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THE *Flesh* our domestick Enemy, ceases not to attack us with its sinful Charms. The *Devil*, that watchful and cruel Enemy of Mankind, exerts his utmost vigour to involve us in his Misery. How shall we overcome them? Are these Enemies not to be regarded? Can we think it an easy Matter to conquer them? May they be worsted by the best natural Strength? No, and yet they must be subdued, or we lose our Souls. Salvation is certainly a *hard Task*.

No wonder our Saviour tells us, the Kingdom of Heaven *is to be taken by Violence*. No wonder the Gate that leads to Bliss is *narrow*, and *few find it*. No wonder the Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a *precious Stone*. It is precious indeed, we must relinquish every Thing in order to purchase it; we must *strive even unto Blood*, before we can obtain it.

EXAMINE your selves, and be surpriz'd at the *Folly* of the greatest Part of Mankind, who vainly imagine they shall go to Heaven without taking Pains for it: Ye
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can do nothing of your selves ; but to the Grace of GOD *all Things are possible*. Ask it then in your fervent and humble Prayers, and you shall assuredly obtain it.



5. On the Possibility of being saved.

IT is an unquestionable Point of Faith, That thro' the Grace of GOD we may all be sav'd. CHRIST calls upon us, *Mat. xi. Come unto me, all ye that are heavy loaden, and I will give you Rest. Come, you blessed of my Father, possess the Kingdom prepared for you from the Beginning of the World: Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* Would CHRIST have thus call'd us, Would he have invited us to his glorious Kingdom, were we not in a Way of being Saved? Would he have informed us, that the Poor, the Meek, the Chaste and Humble
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enter Heaven, were there no Heaven for them? No, he had never said it, he had never redeem'd us; GOD had never created us, were we not *capable of Salvation*.

IT is Blasphemy to charge GOD with the least *Injustice*; and it must be a very great one to lay an Injunction on us of saving our Souls, under pain of Damnation, and leave us destitute of all *Means* to effect it. 'Tis true, the Way of Salvation is *difficult*: 'Tis true, we have the Devil and other implacable Enemies confederate against us: But what then? is not GOD above the Devil? And tho' we cannot defeat him by our own *Strength*, are we not succoured by the *Divine Grace* in order to do it? Does it not support us under the sharpest Conflicts? Is it not our Comfort in the most threatening Dangers.

LET us not be dejected at the Number of our Enemies; there are Legions of *Angels* to stand by us. We have the dreadful Torments of the Damned to quicken our Slothfulness; we have the Promise of *Everlasting Bliss* to encourage us in the

94 **Preparation**
the Combate; what can we desire more?

EXAMINE your selves, and resolve to do your utmost for the gaining your Souls: It is in *your Power* to be saved; therefore if you are lost, it will be thro' your own Fault. Reflect on the *Opportunities* you have had, above Thousands, of purchasing Happiness, and remember, *the more you have received, the more you have to answer for.*



6. *On the Means of Salvation.*

IT is no *small Grace* to be born of Christian Parents, while the greater Part of the World lies buried in Infidelity. It is no *small Grace* to be educated in the Bosom of the holy Catholick Church, whilst many are led away with Error. It is no slender Mercy to have been instructed in our Youth, and to have had daily Opportunities of saving our Souls. How many at this Time are lamenting
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in Hell's Flames, who, had they been favoured with Half those Helps we continually receive, would probably have been Saints in Heaven?

What mean the *Sacraments*? Are they not given us as Helps to Salvation? Are they not instituted for bathing our Souls in CHRIST's healing Blood? How many comfortable *Exhortations* do we hear? How many good Books are put into our Hands, to wean our Affections from a *flattering World*, and to fix them on a more *desirable Good*? How soon were we taught to pray, and to pray for Heaven? How many Examples have we to excite us to Virtue? We have the rare Example of a crucified GOD: We have the encouraging Lives of Saints and Martyrs; are not these great Helps? Nay, every respective State of Life, every Sickness, or unfortunate Calamity; our very Passions, if rightly managed, serve as so many Helps to Salvation.

EXAMINE your selves, and see what Use you have made of these *distinguishing Favours*. Repent of
past

past Neglects, and look upon it as a singular mercy, that you are not cast off for Neglect of them. Who is the better for your Happiness, besides *your selves* ? GOD is not.



C H A P. III.

On Devotion.

THERE are many Christians who pretend to *Devotion*, when they have nothing of it. Some think themselves *devout*, because they are given to *Fasting*, tho' at the same Time their Hearts are full of Malice : Others, because they huddle over many *Prayers*, tho' they make no Scruple of *detra-cting*, or *rashly judging* their Neighbour. Others again, believe themselves *devout*, because they are liberal in giving *Alms*, tho' they cannot find in their Hearts to *forgive* their Enemies : Alas ! such false Devotion will never save them.

TRUE Devotion pushes us on *vigorously* and *cheerfully* to pursue Virtue. Nothing can come amiss to

to the *devout Soul*. She is like the Bee, that turns the bitterest Juice into the sweetest Honey.

DEVOTION is the Queen of Virtues : If Love be a Fire, Devotion is its Flame ; if Love be a Plant, Devotion is its Flower ; if a rich Balm, Devotion is its Smell ; which comforts Men, and rejoices Angels.

GIVE me, O GOD, the Grace of *true Devotion* ; I know that with it I shall receive the greatest Blessing upon Earth. Ah ! The Fires and Racks were Perfumes to the Martyrs, because they were *devout*. Devotion changes the Hardships of Mortification and Self-denial, into Beds of Roses. It removes Discontent from the afflicted ; it fills the Soul with an exceeding Delight. O grant me the Grace of *true Devotion*.

EXAMINE your selves, and labour to obtain this rich *Virtue*, by withdrawing your Affections from a false World. Pretend no Excuse, for Devotion is suitable to all States and Callings. The Prince may be devout, so was King *David*.

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The Soldier, so was the Centurion, and his Servant; the Widow may be devout, so was *Monica* the Mother of St. *Augustine*. The married may be devout, *Zachary* and *Elisabeth* were both righteous.

II.

On Fervour in Devotion.

IT is not enough to serve GOD after any Sort, it must be done with *Fervour*: This *Gratitude*, and our *Interest* oblige us to. What has not GOD done for us? He has *created* us after his own Image, he has *redeem'd* us with the Blood of his only Son, he *loves* us exceedingly, and shall we not make a grateful Return to the best of our Power? Nothing is too hard to a Soul, that *fervently* serves its GOD; his *Yoke is easie*, and his *Burden light* to such a Heart. Who can be slack in his Christian Duties, when he considers, that the Happiness of Heaven will be *proportion'd* to the
Fervour

Fervour of his Devotion on Earth.

IF our *Services* are to be measured by the *Master* we serve, how *zealous* ought our *Services* to be, when they regard a *GOD infinitely Great*? The Courtier eagerly solicites his Prince; he studies his Inclinations to prevent his Commands; he readily and carefully executes his Orders; he sacrifices his Repose, his Pleasures, and his All, for his Prince's Sake; and shall we not as *fervently* serve our *GOD*! O *GOD*, it is thou alone who deservest our most *fervent* Homages.

CHRISTIANS, Let us be *fervent* in our Devotions to *GOD*: Let us pray with *Fervour*, let us fast with *Fervour*, let every Action of our Life speak a *Fervour*. Let us frequent the holy Sacrament, and *fervently* prepare our selves for it. Let us attentively give Ear to the Word of *GOD*. Let us strive against our Failings; let us improve in Virtue; let us separate ourselves from Creatures; let *GOD* alone be the Object of our Thoughts, the Centre of our Hearts. Our Passions are so many Torrents, and it is

thus we are to break the Force of them.

EXAMINE your selves, and be very fervent in these Duties. Remember that those who came last into the *Vineyard*, were *equally* rewarded with the first Comers, because they were more fervent. *Fervour* is the Soul of Devotion. Follow then St. Paul's Advice; *Be fervent in Spirit, serving the LORD.*

II.

On Coldness in Devotion.

IT is a Sin to be *slack* in our Devotions to **GOD**, because we came into the World for no other End than to *love* and *serve* him. The same Reasons which oblige us to our Duty any one Day of our Lives, equally oblige us every Day. **GOD** was our **LORD** Yesterday, he is so To-day, and will always be so. Ah! Did the *Love of GOD* inflame our Hearts, we should be more vigorous, and fervent in his holy Service, than we generally are: Did

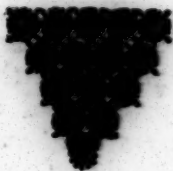
Did the *Holy Ghost* dwell within us, it were impossible our Souls should be so benum'd, that divine Fire wou'd warm our Breasts.

THE older we are, the more ought we in Gratitude to improve in Virtue, because the *Blessings* of GOD grow up with us; out of how many Dangers has his Goodness deliver'd us! From what dreadful Precipices does he actually preserve us? How many Graces does he pour down upon us? Alas! We have no Way left for answering these Blessings, but by our most *religious Homages*.

DEATH is at our Gates, how shall we repent in that parting Moment, that we spent not our precious Time more carefully in preparing for it? Judgment draws on; what a Terror will it be to us, when we shall hear at the Bar of the divine Justice, that dreadful Sentence pronounced against us, *Cast the unprofitable Servant into utter Darkness?* Matth. xxv. We are entring upon an *Eternity*; let us now while Time is, prepare for a happy one. What would not

the *Damned* in Hell give to be in our *Circumstances*? Would they be cold in their Devotions to GOD! Wou'd they think any Pains too much to be employ'd in his Service? No certainly.

EXAMINE your selves, and fix the like Sentiments in your Hearts. Shake off all Coldness in your Devotions to Almighty GOD; and remember, nothing provokes him more, than to fall off from your former *Iervour*. *Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after Righteousness*, Matth. v. Daily renew your good Resolutions, say with David, *I have sworn and will keep it, that I will observe thy Righteous Judgments*.





CHAP. IV.

Serious Considerations on PRAYER.

1 *The Necessity of it.* 2 *The Advantages of it.* 3 *The Conditions of Prayer.* 4 *Of Distractions in Prayer.* 5 *Morning Prayer.* 6 *The vain Excuses of the World in Point of Prayer.*

I.

On the Necessity of Prayer.

SALVATION is our Affair ;
there's no purchasing it with-
out the Grace of GOD : And
there's no surer Means of obtaining
this Grace, than by hearty Prayer ;
Ask and it shall be given to you.
We must pray, happy Necessity !
Which forces us to own our Dependence

dence on GOD, and puts us in the Method of true Humility. We are naturally bent to the Corruption of Sin; we are beset on every Side with threatening Enemies; the World, Flesh, and Devil, with united Force, conspire our Ruin; what shall we do? Fly we must; but whither? To GOD, born on the *Wings of Prayer*.

OUR Saviour's Life was a perpetual Course of *Prayer*. He repair'd to a lonesom Desert, where for the Space of 40 Days and Nights he was employ'd in *Prayer*. After he had laboured all the Day in the Conversion of Souls, he spent the Night in *Prayer*.

As he lived in the Exercise, so he gave up his Soul in *Prayer*, and for his Enemies too, *Father, forgive them*. Why all this? Was it for himself? No, it was to convince us of the *Necessity* of *Prayer*.

O sweetest Saviour, we receive with a hearty Thankfulness this *divine Spirit*; our daily Wants demonstrate its *Necessity*: we embrace it as bequeath'd us by a most tender Parent; we will cherish and preserve

preserve this sacred Pledge of Love to the End of our Days; for 'tis then we should beg to die, when we cease to pray.

EXAMINE your selves, and pray that you may vanquish the Enemies of your Souls, pray that you be no more Slaves to Pride, Covetousness, Drunkenness, Swearing or brutal Impurities; pray to disengage your selves from a corrupt World; pray that you may die a happy Death; pray always.

II.

On the Advantages of Prayer.

FERVENT Prayer penetrates the Clouds; GOD can never deny its Requests if duly offer'd. We have CHRIST's Word for it; *Verily, verily, I say unto you, If you shall ask the Father any Thing in my Name, he will give it you; ask and you shall receive, that your Joy may be full,* John xvi. Ah! What Encouragement have we here to pour out our Souls in humble Prayer?

DOES the *Flesh* strive to allure us with its impure Baits, Prayer is an excellent Fence against these *Concupiscences*. Does the World attack us with its *criminal Excesses*, Prayer is a strong Barrier against all *Lusts of the Eyes*.

DOES the Devil tempt us to the Ruin of our own Souls, Prayer has and will defeat him. It is a sure Weapon against *Pride of Life*.

HAPPY Prayer! which thus defends us from the Rage of our Enemies, and effectually solicites in our Behalf at the Throne of Grace.

ST. Peter's Cross, the Sword of St. Paul, the sever'd Head of the Baptist, the Tears of *Magdalene*, and all the Racks of Martyrs, would never have rendred them such triumphing Saints, had they not been fortified with the Spirit of Prayer. By *Prayer* they were united to GOD, by *Prayer* they were swallowed up in GOD, by *Prayer* they were chang'd to a thrice happy Transformation into GOD himself. O LORD, how sweet is thy Spirit? How beneficial the Spirit thou hast left us,
the

106 *Prayer* 107
the Spirit of Prayer thou hast recommended to us.

EXAMINE your selves, and resolve upon embracing the good Advice of the Apostle St. Paul, *Pray without ceasing*. Pray when ye awake, pray before sleeping; pray for your Friends and for your Enemies. In the Time of Temptation, pray as earnestly as Seamen in a Storm, who are every Minute lifting up their trembling Hands and weeping Eyes to Heaven. Let the *Innocence* of your Lives be a *perpetual Prayer*.

III.

On the Conditions or Manner of Prayer.

THERE'S hardly a Day passes over our Heads, but we say our Prayers; and yet in all appearance we are never the better for them; our Lives are as corrupt as ever, we are subject to our usual Weaknesses and Failings, Humour

mour and Inclination get the upper Hand, and push us on to almost every Thing we do. How comes it? What can be the Reason our Prayers have so little Effect, when CHRIST has given such Assurances of granting our Petitions? The Case is evident, we pray not as we ought.

WE are to *humble* our selves in the Presence of GOD, we are to go to him as Beggars for an Alms, as a sick Man to his Phyfician, as a Criminal to his Judge to sue for Mercy. Alas! how unworthy are we, wretched Worms, to ask a Favour, and personally of him too, in whose Presence the awful Angels tremble!

OUR Prayers must be *fervent*; what we beg is the *Grace and Love* of GOD, the Source of our Happiness in this World, and eternal Happiness in the World to come. Does not such a Petition deservedly require our best Endeavours? In our *temporal Addresses* we beg and pray, we are not cold nor slothful, but over solicitous for gaining our Ends; and shall we be less concerned

cern'd in the Business of Eternity.

AN unshaken *Constancy* must accompany our Prayers. GOD many Times grants to *Perseverance*, what he denies to Prayer; had the *Canaanitish* Woman left our Saviour at the sharp Repulse she first received, probably her Daughter had never been cured. *Grace* would lose its Estimate, *Heaven* would sink beneath our Care, if every Sigh, or a few Words could obtain what they ask at every Turn.

EXAMINE your selves, and let your Prayers be accompanied with these Three Conditions, *Humility*, *Fervency* and *Perseverance*. If they be not, your Prayers will turn but to little Account. Be sure to be untainted with *wilful Sin*, for the Prayers of the *wilful Sinner* are a Provocation to GOD; instead of Mercy he draws the Divine Vengeance on his Head. Be but as earnest and solicitous in your Prayers, as you are in your Petitions to some temporal Power, and your Work is done.

IV.

On Distractions in Prayer.

IT is an usual Thing to be *dis-tracted* in Prayer. The Reason thereof, in the better Sort of Christians, is the Feebleness of Nature, and the Artifice of the Devil, who labours all he can to discourage them at that Time in their pious Undertakings. In *backward* Christians, they spring from Sloth, from the little Concern they have for advancing in Perfection, and from their eager Affections to the Things of this World; *For where their Treasure is, their Hearts are also.* Mat. vi.

Distractions will never hurt us in case they be not *voluntary*: Let us not be *too much* troubled at them, especially since they are often Times the Effect of Mercy: They are often permitted for a Trial of *Humility*; to make us sensible of our weak Selves; and to own a *total* Dependence

pendence on GOD. They are permitted as a *Punishment* of past Neglects, and in order to rouse our drooping Thoughts: They are oft-times permitted for a Proof of *Patience*, and consequently to augment our *Glorie* in Heaven: Why then are we troubled?

O GOD, I do not wonder I am subject to *Distractions*; I see I can do nothing, even when I most desire it, unless supported by thy helping Grace, which I little deserve. Pardon, I beseech thee, all my past *wilful* Neglects; I am resolv'd for the future, *speedily* to recal my wandering Thoughts; I will remember in whose *Presence* I am, and *wherefore* I speak: a *Holy Intention*, with a Petition for thy Grace, shall go before my *Prayers*.

EXAMINE your selves, and see if these be your good Purposes. Be sure to shun all *wilful Distractions* in the Time of Prayer; not to do it, is to mock GOD. Be not dejected at *unwilful* Ones, since your Prayers are not the less *fruitful* upon their Account. It will be a great Help to you, seriously to reflect on the

the Place you are in, and that it is to GOD you speak. Say with Holy David, *Let the Words of my Mouth, and the Meditations of my Heart, be always acceptable in thy Sight, O LORD, my Strength and my Redeemer.*

V.

On Morning Prayer.

MORNING Prayer is one of the most essential Duties of a Christian. GOD is our LORD, and therefore we must serve him; he is our last End, and therefore our *first Thoughts* are to be directed to him. *The wise Man shall, in the Morning early, give his Heart to GOD who made him. Eccl. xxxix.* Is this our Practice? For shame, let not the early Homages of the *Pagans* to their wooden gods, out-do us *Christians*.

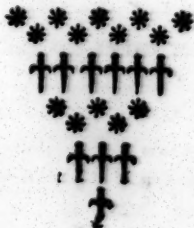
EACH Moment of our Lives affords us fresh Instances of Divine Blessings, and can we be too forward

in making a Return of *Gratitude* for them? Many have gone in good Health to sleep, and never waked more; so sudden a Death, and perhaps an *eternal* one too, might have been ere this our unhappy Fate, had not a merciful GOD preserved us: And shall not the *first Thoughts* of our *awakened* Hearts be an humble *Thanksgiving* for so great a Mercy? Had we a true Love for GOD, and Concern for our Souls, our morning Thoughts would be directed to him.

LET us but consider the dangerous and daily Occasions of Sin, in which we are engag'd; the violent Tentations with which we are beset, the *Business* of the World, which almost ever takes up our Thoughts, and we shall be forc'd to own an absolute Necessity of *Morning Prayer*. This was the constant Practice of the Royal Psalmist, *My Voice shalt thou hear, in the Morning, O LORD; in the Morning will I direct my Prayer unto Thee, and will look up, Psal. v. I will offer up and consecrate my first Thoughts to thee,*

thee, that I may spend the following Day in thy Service.

EXAMINE your selves, and be faithful in the Performance of this indispenfible Duty. In Acts of Adoration, Love, Thanksgiving; in Acts of Sorrow and Detestation for past Offences, make an Offering of your selves and of all the Actions of the Day, every Morning of your Lives; let the like Devotion be your Evening Exercife. Examine your Confciencces, and let no Pretence put by this Duty. Beg the Grace of dying well, and *finifh* every Day as it were to be the last of your Lives.



V I.

*On the vain Excuses of the
World in Point of Prayer.*

WHAT need I pray? **GOD** knows my Wants. It is true, and he will have us know them too by fervent Prayer. *Ask and it shall be given you*, not otherways. Well, I would *willingly* pray, but can find no Time for it; a poor Plea indeed! we can find Time for eating and drinking, for unnecessary Sports, for superfluous Visits, for idle Talk; and *none* for Prayer, upon the Performance whereof an Eternity depends!

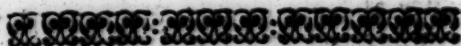
I would fain pray, but the Business of the World takes up my Thoughts. Alas! for this very Reason we ought to pray the *more*. How can we hope for *Success* in our Affairs, if we neglect to recommend them to the Hands of Providence, from whom all is derived? But my Concerns are of Importance.
Sup-

Suppose so; is there any temporal Concern to be balanced with those of the Soul! If Affairs be pressing, can we not set aside one Quarter of an Hour for devout Prayer, or raise our Hearts to God amidst Employments, by *pious Ejaculations*?

IT is in Vain to pray, since my grievous and repeated Crimes make me *despair* of Mercy. Unhappy Artifice! does not our Blessed JESUS encourage every Sinner, with a *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you Rest*? Mat. 11. Does not the Psalmist bid us *Call upon G O D in the Day of Trouble*? Ought the sick Man not to have Recourse to his Physician, because his Disease is desperate? Ought the Criminal not to sue for Pardon, because his Crimes are hainous.

EXAMINE your selves, and say with the Publican, *Lord, be merciful to me a Sinner*. Say with the Church, *We Sinners beseech Thee to hear us*. Let not these unchristian Pretences enter your Thoughts. When you go to Prayer, make Choice of a convenient Time and Place, the better

ter to recollect your wandring Thoughts. It is not in a Multitude of *Prayers* that *Devotion* consists, but in the saying them well.



CHAP. V.

Serious Considerations,

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| 1 On Repen- | | 3 Death-bed Re- |
| tance, | | pentance, |
| 2 The delay- | | 4 Resolutions of |
| ing it, | | Amendment. |

I.

On Repentance.

THERE are but two Ways that lead to Heaven; the Way of *Innocence*, and the Way of *Repentance*. If we go not by the first Way, we must take the second. *Every Sinner must repent or burn.* S. Chrys. We have sufficient Opportunities offer'd, and why do we neglect them! A Self-denial, a truly penitent Tear, what will it not effect!

effect ! A contrite and humble Heart, O GOD, thou wilt not despise.

REPENTANCE at a Distance appears severe ; it seems to breathe *Blood and Tears*, its entertaining Discourse is of *Combats and Temptations* : But if we draw the Prospects nearer, we shall find it *comfortable*, and followed with a *Joy* far surpassing its seeming Difficulties. If it be a sad Misfortune to provoke GOD by wilful Sin, how great a Comfort must it be to possess him by Repentance ? If it be an Unhappiness to the Sinner to be a Slave to his Passions, and rack'd at the View of his repeated Crimes ; what an unspeakable Comfort must it be, to see his Crimes effaced, and his Conscience appeased by a true Repentance ?

ARE you in Sin, Repent. Have you neglected the Concerns of Eternity, Repent. Have you divided your Hearts betwixt GOD and the World, Repent. *There is Joy in Heaven at the Repentance of a Sinner.*

Examine your selves, and see if
your

your Repentance has been sincere: It is not enough to say, you repent; your Lives must shew it. Many delude themselves in this Particular; if they knock their Breasts, and cry, *Lord* be merciful to me a Sinner; if they run over an Act of Contrition they meet with in their Prayer Books, they conclude their Work done; but alas! it is to be fear'd they are too often deceived.

II.

On the Delay of Repentance.

IT is a Saying of St. Gregory, *He that has promised Pardon to those who repent, has never promised true Repentance to those who defer it.* One of the most crafty Sights of the Devil, to keep an unhappy Soul in his Possession; one of the most dangerous Errors we slide into, is the deferring our Repentance from Time to Time, till it be past all Time. It is an Error, the most pernicious, because in the Matter of the highest Concern; it is an Error the most impious, because it springs not from Ignorance, Surprize or Inadvertence,

tence, but from down-right Malice.

SHOULD a Man's House take Fire, and a Friend run in to give him Notice of it, before the spreading Flame had laid hold of the main Timber, it would be an Argument of the greatest Folly, to reply, There is no haste, let it burn on till the Fire has reached the Foundation, and then bring the Engines. It is the very Case of the delaying Sinner; his Soul is in a Flame with a long Habit of Sin; it is burnt up with lawless Passions more raging than Fire; he is advis'd to repent, he cannot at present; let the Fire first sink into the Bottom of his Soul, and then he'll think on't. Unhappy Soul! is it an uneasie Thing to return to thy offended **GOD**? Is it an Uneasiness to be deliver'd from the Fetters of thy Passions, From the Slavery of the Devil, from the Precipice of Hell? Be not thus deceived.

BUT thou wilt repent hereafter: How dost thou know, thou wilt be hereafter, much less that thou shalt repent hereafter? Hast thou the
Times

Times and moments at thy own disposal? Thou cannot be so presumptuous. The damned in Hell said, *They would Repent hereafter*; but it prov'd not so. How dost thou know, but thy Lot may be the same? Nothing can provoke God more than an *impenitent Heart*.

EXAMINE your selves, and fail not to follow the Advice of the *Holy Ghost*: *Make no tarrying to turn to the Lord*, and put it not off from Day to Day. Eccles. v. Remember a Christian has no *To Morrow*. Let the wretched Delay of the damn'd in Hell, be an awakening Consideration to move you to a *speedy and effectual Repentance*.

III.

On Death-bed Repentance.

A *True Change of Heart* is a Point of the greatest Difficulty; as it is impossible to wash an *Ethiopian* White, or to take off the natural Spots from a *Leopard's* Skin, so likewise is it for the habitual Sinner to convert himself

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to God, unless assisted by a great Mercy. If so, at all Times, What can we think of the dying Sinner, When he is rack'd with the gripping Torture of his Sicknes, when his Spirits are spent, his Strength decay'd, when his Soul is toss'd betwixt a thousand Agitations, when his Thoughts are dash'd at the Horror of his crying Sins, and a fatal Eternity? What can we think? Have we not Reason to suspect the Sincerity of his Repentance, and that Sin leaves him, and not that he leaves Sin.

WHAT if the Minister shall put in his Mouth, *a Lord have Mercy on my Soul?* Will this do? Will it make amends for his loss of Time? For his spending it in Sin? Will this be Satisfaction for his Neglect of the Inspirations, Graces, and Calls of his merciful Lord? Will this atone for the multiply'd Sins of his Life past? It is well if that Commination of our blessed Saviour be not here too truly verified, *I will go away, and ye shall seek me, and ye shall die in your Sins.* John viii.

SIN is to be retrench'd by the Practice of Virtue, the proud Man must become *Humble*, the lustful *Cast*, the passionate *Meek*, the slothful *Fervent*; And can this be in a Moment? Where is that due *Examination* of *Conscience*, that hearty *Contrition*, that sincere *Confession*, necessary for the wiping off the Guilt of Sin? It is much to be fear'd, that as the Sinner in his Lifetime forgot God, so at his Death he'll forget himself.

EXAMINE your selves, and timely resolve upon entring on the Business of *Repentance*. Let it be accompany'd with vigorous Resolutions of Amendment. Watch and study all the Motions of your Heart, what *Passions* are most Pre-dominant, what *Inclinations* second them, that you may be the better able to subdue them by an early *Repentance*.

IV.

On Resolutions of Amendment.

THE *restless Enemies* of Mankind, which ly in wait for our Souls; The natural *Corruptions* and *Imperfections* of our Hearts; Our *Insufficiency* and *Coldness* in what regards Salvation, are Proofs of the Necessity of repeated *Resolutions* for a virtuous Life. *Thinking* and *resolving* go Hand in Hand, there is no reaching Heaven without them both.

It is for want of *true Resolution*, that the greatest Part of the World unfortunately miscarries, by relapsing into Sin, and by living in Sin. It is for want of *resolving*, that the better Sort of Christians find a discouraging *Coldness* in the Practice of Virtue, make small Improvement, and are as subject as ever to multiply'd Failings. What caus'd the *Martyrs* to lay down their Lives? Their good *Resolutions*. What fills Heaven with glorious

glorious Saints ? Good *Resolutions*.

WHAT are our *Resolutions* ? Are they not like our Prayers, in general Terms only ? Are they not weak and imperfect *Resolutions* ? These will not do. No, they must be *serious, strong and entire*, like those of the Saints, if we hope to have a Part in their Happiness. Heaven is the Reward of *Resolutions* begun on Earth. We must resolve to shun Sin and embrace Virtue ; to spend our Time well, and retrench all Failings, if we hope to find it.

EXAMINE your selves, and stand to your *Resolutions*. Renew them daily. Let no Circumstance of Life be a hindrance to you ; let this be your Prayer, Help me, O Lord, in my good Purposes, and in thy holy Service ; and grant that I may perfectly begin now, since what I have hitherto done is nothing. Imit. Christ, l. i. c. 19.



CHAP. VI.

The Christians Pattern.

I.

On the Example of Christ.

CHRIST has suffered for you, says St. Peter, leaving you an Example that ye tread his Steps, 1 Peter 2. We are willing to follow the Example of a good Friend, nothing hinders us: Let our Prince set the most difficult Example, let him hazard his Life in the furious Heat of Battle, we are prepar'd to die with him: Christ is our Friend, he is our best Friend, and are we as ready to follow him? He is our King, no earthly King can compare to him; and are we ambitious of serving him? It would be a happy Ambition indeed.

JESUS

JESUS CHRIST has ransom'd our Souls with the Price of his Blood, by dying for us; he has raised us to the highest degree of Honour; he has given us a Right to the Kingdom of Heaven, and are we disposed to follow his *Example* to the Effusion of our Blood? He desires no more, than that having given us inirely his most loving Heart, we reciprocally on our Parts return him ours.

CHRIST has humbled himself, that we Christians may do the same, at the sight of our Offences. He *meekly* bore with the Insults of the *Jews* for our *Example*. He cured the Deaf and Dumb, and Blind, to stamp on our Hearts *fraternal Charity*. He led a poor and obscure Life, to recommend to us a *Poverty of Spirit*, and to fly *vain Glory*. He drank of the bitter Cup of *Affliction*, to engage us to *submit* to these Scourges the divine Justice shall lay upon us: And after all, shall we do nothing for our selves? Ah! that these were the true Sentiments of our Hearts, *Master, I'll follow thee where ever thou goest*, MAT. 18.

EXAMINE your selves, and if you really desire to crush sinful Pride, to disengage your Hearts from brutal Pleasures, or to wean your Affections from a vain World, be sure to meditate often on the Life of CHRIST. By a diligent turning of our Eyes on our divine Master, we shall most effectually surmount the Attempts of our Enemies, and come at length to our unspeakable Comfort, *to form him in us.* Gal. iv.

II.

On the Imitation of Christ.

I *Am the Light of the World, he that follows me walks not in Darknes,* John viii. Had we a true Sense of JESUS CHRIST, did we love him with all our Hearts, it would be natural to us to copy his *Example.* One of the most sensible Arguments of our Love, is the *passionate Desire* we have of being united to the Person whom we love, and this Union is effected by

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a Resemblance of Heart. How unspeakable a Happiness must it be, to have our Hearts united to the Heart of JESUS, to have our Hearts burning with the Love of JESUS, to have them *inflam'd* with his Zeal for Souls, *embellish'd* with his Innocence, *emboldened* by his Patience, to suffer any Persecution!

CHILDREN naturally imitate their Parents, and one Friend another. JESUS CHRIST is a loving Father to us; he is a true Friend, and are we not stirred up to an *Imitation* of him? Our eternal Interest depends upon it; and will not this move us?

WHAT's more honourable, than to tread the Steps of a GOD-MAN? What more noble, than to fight and conquer with him? Our blessed LORD exacts nothing from us, but what himself has done. If he invites us to carry our Cross, he has done it to the utmost Rigour: If he exhorts us to use Violence to our Passions, he has already practised it; If he has oblig'd us to pardon Injuries, wonder not, it was his ex-
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piring Breath on the Cross, *Father, forgive them*, Mat. xxviii.

EXAMINE your selves, and endeavour to transcribe the *Virtues* of your *Original* into the Copy of your Lives. Let the *Example* of CHRIST be the Rule of your Actions; Let it be the Object of your Thoughts; in your Studies, at your Work, when you awake, before you sleep, at all Times, and in all Occurrences of Life, think on JESUS.

III.

On the Conformity of a Christian to the Life of Christ.

I Have given you an *Example*, that as I have done, so do you likewise, *John* xiii. 'Tis what CHRIST speaks to every one of us. To be a Christian, is to conform to *Jesus Christ*; to deviate from him, is to be in Effect a *Heathen*. *I am in vain a Christian*, says St. Bernard, *if I follow not Christ*.

JESUS CHRIST has taught, that the brightest Glory is founded upon

upon *Humility*; that the Happiness of a Christian, is to be sought amidst *Sufferings*, the most durable Riches in a true Poverty of Spirit. He has told us, we must renounce our selves, that we must check our Inclinations. Let us sound our Hearts. Are these our Sentiments? If not, there's no pretending a *Conformity* to the Life of Christ.

JESUS CHRIST loved to Suffer, he lov'd *Humiliations*. He lov'd them, because they were the only Means for propagating the *Glory* of his heavenly Father, and the Salvation of Mankind. Do we partake of the like Affections? Do we *resignedly* submit to the divine Appointments? Are we ready to engage in what concerns the Honour of God? This is, to *conform* to Christ.

THE End of Christ's Actions was the *Glory* of his Father. His curing the Lame, the Deaf, the Blind, his preaching, exhorting, and converting Souls; his eating, sleeping, and whatever he did, was always *referr'd* to the *Glory* of his Father. Is the Honour of God the

End

End of our Performances? It must be so, if we think of *conforming* to the Life of Christ. There is no Action of Life, even the most indifferent, but what may be *sanctified* by a Christian *Intention*.

EXAMINE your selves, and conclude with this humble Confession of your past Miscarriages. Most merciful Saviour, I acknowledge thy Goodness in making me a Christian, and am confounded that I have so little complied with the Character. I crave the Grace of a hearty Repentance, and that thou wouldst enable me for the future, to conform my Life to thy *unblemished Original*.

IV.

On the Love of CHRIST.

THE Measure of Love is to love without Measure; such was the Love JESUS CHRIST bore us. He loved us more than we loved our selves; He *loved* us more than the Blessed in Heaven can love him;

him ; tho' they are swallowed up in *Love*, he preferred the *Love of us* to his own dear Life ; he died to save us. Ah ! let us never be so *ungrateful*, as not to return *Love* for *Love*.

WE love our temporising Friends, and shall we not love our best of Friends, JESUS CHRIST ? It is true, he invites us with Promises, he presses us with Blessings, he solicites by Inspirations ; he obliges us by Threats, to give him our *Hearts* ; but for no other End but for our own Sakes. Little Advantage will accrue to him by the Return of our *Love*. When we have done our utmost, we are still *unprofitable Servants*, Luke xvii.

CHRISTIANS, CHRIST has loved us to an *infinite Degree*, he loved us when we knew him not, he loved us when in the *Jews* we conspired his Death ; and tho' perhaps at this very Time, by repeated Crimes, we *crucify him again*, he loves us still ; and because he is forc'd to use a Charm to soften our stony Hearts, see, he composes a Love-Potion, he gives us his *Body*
and

and *Blood* for our Food. O how unspeakable is the Love our JESUS bears us?

MY Soul, should thy Saviour put the Question to thee, as he did to St. Peter, *Peter dost thou love me?* Couldst thou safely answer, *O Lord, thou knowest that I love thee?* Would not the little Scruple thou makest of offending him, thy Backwardness in Virtue, thy Ingratitude and Insensibility in regard to past Favours, bely thy Words?

EXAMINE your selves, and see if you have not been cold in the Love of CHRIST; rectifie past Omissions, and let your Prayer be that of St. Augustine, *O Lord, I know thou hast commanded me to love thee; give me necessary Grace to fulfil thy Commands, and command what thou wilt.*

V.

On a Confidence in Christ.

THO' Sin be in a Manner infinite, in as much as it attacks an infinite Majesty; yet notwithstanding its Malice, Christ by his Death, has made a *superabounding*
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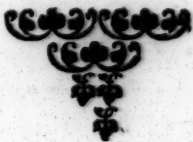
Satisfaction for all the most crying Sins of Mankind. And altho' he might have otherways atton'd for them, yet it was his Will to *Suffer*; he shed his Blood, and not a *Drop* only, which would abundantly suffice, but he was resolved to shed even the last *Drop* of it. O how great a Subject of *Confidence* must it be to a Christian Heart, to see such an Overflow of Merits purchased by the Sufferings of his dying Lord!

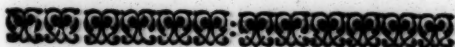
BUT for whom did Christ die? For us Sinners; And as in Quality of our *Head*, he shared our *Misery*; so in regard we are his *Members*, he has communicated to us the Treasures of his *Grace*. What *Motives of Confidence*? Who now can *Despair*, when he considers his God has *satisfied* for his Sins by *dying* for him? Yes, Christians, the *Ransom* is paid; we have a *plentiful Redemption*. It only remains, that we seriously endeavour to *apply* the Merits of our Redemption to our helpless Souls, for without this *Application*, we are still lost.

WE will then confide in the *Merits* of our Saviour: Let the *De-
vil*

vil beset us with the worst of his Temptations ; Let him strive to oppress us by Sadness of Mind, or bodily Afflictions, we need never *fear* him, provided we seek Refuge in the *Wounds* of J E S U S, or shelter ourselves within his *Heart*, so often pierced with the Love of us. *Great is my Injustice*, says the pious St. *Augustine*, but much greater is the Justice of my Redeemer.

EXAMINE your selves, and ever *confide* in the *Merits* of your Redeemer. Let it be a Motive to you, in Order to bear up under the sharpest Trials. In the Time of Temptation, say from your Heart, *In thee, O Lord, I have hoped, let me not be confounded for ever.* Ps. 30.





C H A P. VII.

Of D E A T H.

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|---------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Its certainty, | | 3. Of the Death |
| 2. The uncertainty of the Time, | | 4. Of the Death of the Righteous. |

I.

Its certainty.

DEath spares no one: *It is decreed all Men must die, Heb. ix.* It is not in the Power of Man to reverse this Decree. It reaches from the Throne to the Cottage, and universally includes all Mankind. The Day will come, when these Bodies shall be the Food of Worms; and why do we pamper them? The Hour will come, when

when we must take a long Farewel of the dear Things of this Life; and why do we set our Affections on them? We must bid adieu to our dear Relations, good Friends, and plentiful Estates, and take our Way into another Country, where all we set such a Value upon here, will appear as Smoke.

GOOD GOD! Is it possible that Men should think so little on *Death*, that they should live and sin, as if they were Immortal! That Pride, Anger, Detraction, Impurity, &c. should be the daily and fatal Practice of our Lives! O give me thy *Grace*, that my Life may be a Preparation for this last Hour. I see 'tis a hard Matter to *die well*; I believe Thousands have unhappily miscarried: I know a good Death entirely depends on a good Life.

CHRISTIANS, What Preparations do we make for this last Step, which has caused even the greatest Saints to tremble? *Go forth, my Soul*, (cry'd St. Hilarion at the Point of Death) *why art thou afraid? thou has near 70 Years served*

served thy GOD, and dost thou fear Death ? If this great Saint was thus fearful of Death, ought we not to dread it ? Let us, by Self-denial, by Prayer, and good Works, lay up Provision for that Country, where we shall find no other than what our selves have sent before.

EXAMINE your selves, and be very careful to avoid Sin, the only Evil that makes Death uneasie. Fix Death always before your Eyes. Keep that Watch over all your *Thoughts, Words and Actions*, as if you knew them to be the last of your Lives. Remember you *are Dust, and to Dust you must return.*

I I.

The Uncertainty of the Time.

WHEN shall we die ? Shall it be in Winter or Summer, by Day or Night ; a Week, a Month, a Year hence ? The Time is uncertain : *We know not the Day nor the Hour, Mark xiii.* Where shall we die ? Shall it be at home or abroad ?

broad? In our Beds or at the Table? The *Place* is uncertain. *How* shall we die! Shall it be by a Fever, or the Sword? Shall it be violent or natural? The *Manner* is uncertain.

WHAT *Helps* shall we have? Shall we have the comfortable Assistance of a Church-Man? A timely Opportunity of worthily receiving the holy Sacrament? Shall we truly repent, and in our agonizing Hour happily surmount the last, and therefore most vigorous Assaults of Satan? Alas, we know nothing more, than that Death will come as a Thief; and likely then, when we least expect it: It happened so to the worldly Man mention'd in the Gospel, *Thou Fool, this Night shall thy Soul be demanded of thee*, Luke xii.

IF our Death were reveal'd to be before the End of this Year; how effectually should we withdraw from this vain World: with how close a Hand should we curb our Passions? What Devotions should we not perform? How sincere and unfeigned would our Confessions

essions and Repentance be? What Virtues should we not embrace? We may be in our Graves before the End of this Month; and ought we in Prudence, to be less solicitous? By Death we enter upon Eternity; O! how much depends on this critical and uncertain Moment?

EXAMINE your selves, and let your Lives be a preparation for this uncertain Hour. Remember, it is he who lives well, dies well. *Set your House in Order. Isaiah 38.* and reform the most sensible Failings of your Lives; so that, let Death knock when it will, you may be ever ready to say with *S. Paul, O Lord, it is what I have desired; I desire to be dissolved, and to be with thee. Phil. i.*

III.

Of the Death of the Sinner.

THE Sinner is dying. What Dread oppresses his Conscience! What Anguish seizes his Soul! if he casts an Eye on his Life

Life past, the Disorders thereof fright him into Despair: If he sues for Mercy, he finds it is in vain: If he thinks on his future Lot, the Judgments of a provok'd GOD rack his Thoughts.

The Minister comes, he bids him arm against Death with Acts of Devotion: but these are Arms he knows not how to use: He solicites him to make an Act of *Faith*; he cannot, for he has seldom entertain'd a Thought of GOD or Heaven: He advises him to raise up his Heart by an Act of *Divine Love*; alas, it has been too strongly fixed on Creatures! He presses him to make an Act of Resignation, and pay the Tribute of Nature with a humble Submission: To leave the World! O, this it is that galls his Soul. *Cruel Death! dost thou thus force me away?*

THE Death of the Sinner is the most unhappy of Deaths; unhappy, because he is confounded at the Sight of his past Crimes; Unhappy, because he is entering on a miserable Eternity, to be reserved as an Object of his GOD's Indignation.

for Death. 143

nation. O LORD, let me not die the Death of the Sinner: O receive me into thy Protection in the Day of my Departure: make that Hour favourable to me, and rather let the rest of my Life be sad and sorrowful.

EXAMINE your selves, and by a virtuous Life, endeavour to avoid the Sinner's Death. Remember what St. *Jerom* says, *Of Men whose Lives have been habitually Wicked, scarce one shall find Mercy at his Death.* We think all well, in Case we get the Assistance of a Church-Man, make Confession of our Sins, or give some Signs of a repenting Heart; but, good GOD! how differing are thy Judgments from those of Men?

IV.

On the Death of the Righteous.

THE just Man is dead: He has put a happy Period to his Labours; he has consummated his Victories; he is crowned

Preparation
ed with *Glorious*. *Precious in the Sight*
of the **LORD** is the *Death of his*
Saints. The Saints and Angels
stood ready to receive him, and in a
glorious Train, accompanied him
to Bliss. O, blessed Soul! Thou
hast triumph'd over Death; no
more shalt thou be molested with the
vain Threats of a wretched World:
No more shalt thou fear the At-
tempts of Satan or his eternal Tor-
ments; thou art safely entred into
the Joys of thy Lord.

Do we desire our Death may be
precious in the Sight of **GOD**,
our Lives then must edify the Eyes
of Men: Would we die an easy
Death. It cannot be, unless we
lead a penitential Life. Let us live
piously, and we shall die *comfortably*;
Let us live in *Fear*, and we shall
die with *Courage*. Ah! could we
say with St. Paul, *I die daily* to
Sin, to my Passions; *I die daily*, to
the World, and its Vanities; Thus
should we die a happy Death.

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